

Fables & Fairy Tales

UNCLE REMUS IN HAUSALAND.



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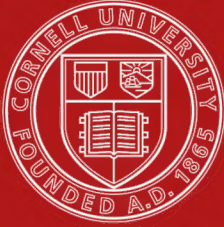
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FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.
FOR LITTLE FOLK.

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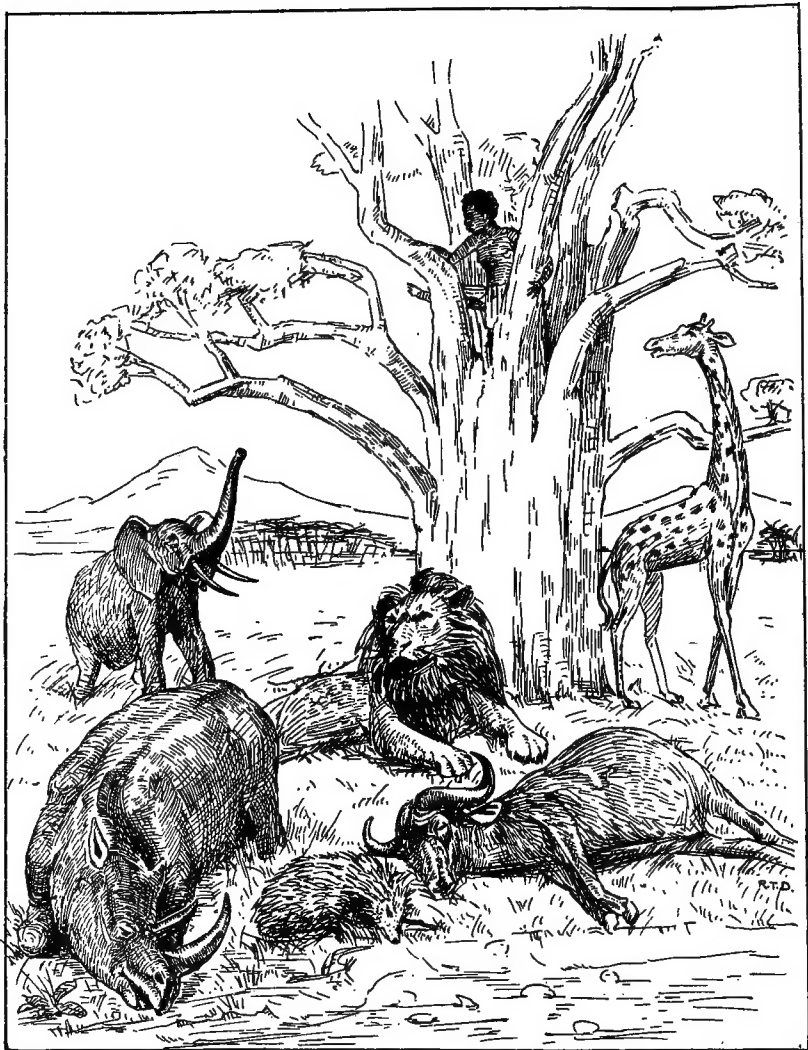
**The Niger and the West Sudan ; The West
African's Note-Book.** Hodder and Stoughton,
1910. 6s.

Notes on Some Nigerian Head-hunters ; an account
of the Kagoro, Morqa and other tailed tribes of
the Narsarawa Province. To be published by the
Royal Anthropological Society, 1911.

Fifty Hausa Folk Tales. Being published in *Folk-Lore*,
the Journal of the Folk-Lore Society, 1910-11.

An Introduction to Hausa Folk-Lore. (In
preparation.)

To
Our Parents.



THE ANIMALS WERE NEARLY DEAD WITH THIRST.

[See page 107.]

Fables and Fairy Tales for Little Folk

OR

UNCLE REMUS IN HAUSALAND.

(First Series.)

BY

MARY & NEWMAN TREMEARNE.

Illustrated.

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PREFACE.

IN offering this little volume to the Public we should like to state that the following tales are part of a collection obtained from Hausa People in Northern Nigeria. If they meet with a favourable reception the remainder will be published later.

The literal translations have appeared in the journals of the Folk-Lore and other Societies, but they would not have interested children as they stood, so they have been very much simplified in this book, care having been taken, however, to preserve the local colour.

We feel that our versions do not do full justice to the tales, most of which are very clever in the original Hausa—and correspondingly difficult to present in a form attractive to Little Folk ; we can only say that we have written them exactly as they have been told to some children we know, for it struck us that they might, if available, prove just as interesting to others.

Blackheath, 1910.

M. T.
A. J. N. T.

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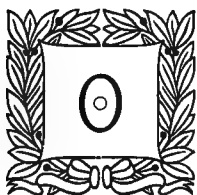
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Fables and Fairy Tales.

I.

HOW THE SCORPION SAVED THE GOAT'S LIFE.



ONCE upon a time there was a man named Momo, and he had a Goat. The Goat was rather tiresome, it was always butting people and getting Momo into trouble. I don't know whether the goat was mischievous, but I rather suspect he was, though he pretended to be sharpening his horns in fun. Any way it was not pleasant, and Momo decided to get rid of him. So he thought he would take him to the nearest town and sell him. You see where Momo lived all the markets are in towns, just as they are in England, and country folk come in on certain days to buy and sell things. Of course Momo hoped to drive a good bargain, so he groomed the Goat well, and led him along very gently and carefully.

On his way he met a Scorpion, and the Scorpion said "Good morning, Momo," for Scorpions, like other horrid people, can be quite polite, "Good morning, Momo, let me escort you to the town."

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

Now it is safer to travel together than alone, so Momo said "Very well, but in that case you will have to lead the Goat." So they went on as before, only now the Scorpion led the Goat.



"ALL THE MARKETS ARE IN TOWNS."

After they had gone on like this for some distance, they met a Hyaena who, being horrid and not polite, said "I think I will join your party." Now the roads in the African forests are very unsafe and lonely, so people travel in parties when they can, and Momo thought it would be

HOW THE SCORPION SAVED THE GOAT'S LIFE.

better to have the Hyaena with them, and in any case Hyaenas are very nasty when they're not pleased about anything, so he said "Oh, very well, if you wish."

They reached the town quite safely, and when they had looked about and found some lodgings, they had supper; the Goat meanwhile being tied up to a tree. After supper, they felt very sleepy, having come quite a long way, so they all decided to go to rest early.

The Hyaena said she would lie down near the Goat so as to be a protection to him, but Momo said he would rather not be too near, for the Goat soon went to sleep and as soon as he was asleep he always began to snore. And you see Momo wanted a good night's rest, for he had to be astir early and find a purchaser for his Goat. He wanted to be fresh and brisk, for he was afraid he would have some trouble in getting a good price, and it was very important, because he hoped to give some presents to the people who had been offended by the Goat's playful butting, and make friends of them again.

Now the Scorpion said nothing, but lay down very near to the Goat and the Hyaena. In the middle of the night he got up and went and settled down upon the Goat's neck.

Presently the Hyaena called softly "Momo, Momo." Receiving no answer, she called again and again, "Momo! Momo! Momo!" But Momo was asleep, and did not

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

hear her, so of course she got no answer. Now what do you think? That wicked old Hyaena got up and came over, very, very softly, to where the Goat was, meaning to kill and eat him!

But just as she was on the point of seizing the goat in her jaws, the Scorpion gave her such a sting on her tongue, that she jumped away with pain. Then seeing that the Scorpion had discovered that there was a thief in the house, she ran back quickly to her bed and lay down again, pretending it was not she! And the Scorpion went back to his bed, too.

Presently the Hyaena said "Scorpion, Scorpion, are you asleep?"

And the Scorpion answered "Oh! dear no, what made you think that? I have not been to sleep yet."

Then the crafty Hyaena said "Oh, Scorpion, I am feeling so ill. I must go home at once. Will you tell Mr. Momo in the morning that I don't think that the supper he gave us was good."

Now this was very wily of the Hyaena, because she thought Momo would want to kill her when the Scorpion told him how she had tried to kill the Goat. So she thought she would pretend, in that case, that she had a reason for wishing to punish him, and thus make him afraid to come near her; for, as I told you, Hyaenas can be horrid when they are annoyed.

HOW THE SCORPION SAVED THE GOAT'S LIFE.

But the Scorpion said, "Oh, Mrs. Hyæna, *I am* sorry. Don't go before the morning, for you know we shall sell the Goat to-morrow, and then, of course, you will get a share of the money. The supper was poor, perhaps, but a good meal to-morrow will set you right."

But the Hyæna was afraid to stay, she was so horribly deceitful herself that, of course, she could not trust anyone else, and she suspected the Scorpion of hatching a plot to kill her, as she had done to kill the Goat. (Some day, perhaps, I shall tell you why the Scorpion hated the Hyæna and wanted to play her a mean trick.) So the Hyæna ran off crying with pain, and no one knows where she went, and I don't believe anyone cares ! Do you ?

II.

THE SPIDER DECEIVES THE HIPPOPOTAMUS
AND THE ELEPHANT.



WONDER if you have ever heard that ages and ages ago the animals held a great council and elected the Spider king ? They believed him to be very wise because his house was so much better built than theirs, and because he used to sit so long in one place looking so learned and never doing anything without thinking it out well first. But I fancy that we should call him only cunning, which shews what different ideas people have, and accounts for many things.

The Spider was really a very wicked person, always up to mischief, and I am going to tell you now how he deceived the Hippopotamus ; but first you must know that the Elephant and the Hippopotamus were always quarrelling about who was the stronger ; and this gave the Spider his chance to play them a nasty trick. So when he met the Elephant one day he said “ Good morning, Mrs. Elephant, how are you ? But there, I

SPIDER, HIPPOPOTAMUS, AND ELEPHANT.

really need not ask, for you look so strong and well, not tired and stupid like Mrs. Hippopotamus who is always half asleep."

This pleased the silly old Elephant very much, and she puffed out her chest (and what an enormous one she has!) and threw back her trunk and laughed for joy. "Why of course I'm well, Mr. Spider, it is very kind indeed of you to ask, but I never felt better, and only wish I had a chance of shewing you how strong I am. Why that silly Mrs. Hippopotamus pretends she could pull me over."

"How ridiculous of her," said the wily Spider, "any one can see that she is no match for you. Would you really like to show the world how very much stronger you are, because of course it isn't really of any use just saying so?"

The Elephant fell head-over-heels into the trap. "I will do anything you like," she said, "if only you give me the chance, but Mrs. Hippopotamus is very difficult. She is one of those people who prefer words to deeds, and I doubt your being able to persuade her."

"We shall see," said the Spider, winking, "we shall see," and shook his head and said "Good-bye." He knew he was considered very wise, and he thought it looked very mysterious and clever to shake his head. Between you and me it was a vain, empty, old head, full only of

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

naughtiness and deceit, but the animals never guessed that. No, they thought him wisest of all.

Away went the Spider to the river to call upon the Hippopotamus. "Good morning, my dear," said he in his nasty, oily voice, "Good morning ; what a pleasure it is to see a young, strong, fine-looking person like yourself. I travel a good deal, and I am not flattering you. I said to Mrs. Elephant only the other day when I happened to meet her in the forest, 'I am going to call on Mrs. Hippopotamus, for the sight of her always makes me feel strong and well.'"

"Oh ! Mr. Spider," said the Hippopotamus, blushing, "*you are* a flatterer."

"Oh no I'm not," he replied, "but what do you think she said ? Well, between ourselves, my dear, I don't like Mrs. Elephant ; no, she is not a favourite of mine. She looks so grey and dismal always, and fancy the conceit of her ! she actually said, 'I should like to have a tug of war with your friend Mrs. Hippopotamus ! I've no patience with such people, always boasting of their strength and never doing anything to show it.' Of course I told her that you were much more powerful really, and if you challenged her I do not believe she would accept : I think she is afraid of you."

So far the Hippopotamus had hardly been able to get in a word, and had only signified her pleasure and gratification by a series of grunts. Now, however, she broke in

SPIDER, HIPPOPOTAMUS, AND ELEPHANT.

excitedly, "Really, Mr. Spider, you are most kind, and if only you will help me to settle that horrid Mrs. Elephant, why I shall be your friend for life. Personally, I cannot bear her." And here, overcome by her feelings, she opened her huge mouth, and uttered the most terrifying snorts and grunts.

When she had become a little calmer the Spider said, "Well, you look so fit, how would to-morrow do? It is of no use losing any time, a stitch in time saves nine, eh"? and he burst out laughing at his own wit. "Ha! ha! Mrs. Elephant will have a very bad stitch to-morrow, Ha! Ha."

"Oh! Mr. Spider, how clever you are," smiled Mrs. Hippopotamus, more pleased than ever, "Do let us have a tug-of-war to-morrow."

"Very well," he replied, "I will go at once and fix it up with Mrs. Elephant, and we shall see, my dear, we shall see."

So the Spider called on the Elephant again, on his way home, and told her that he had happened to meet the Hippopotamus. "She was not looking very well," he said, "but when I told her so she flew into a great rage, and, capering about, she said, 'she knew that I thought you the stronger, but that you could not pull her over in a tug-of-war.'"

"Oh! couldn't I," replied the Elephant, "well, I'm quite ready to teach her a lesson, I could beat her easily."

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

“Of course you could, my dear,” said the Spider, “I told her it was very unwise to say such things, but if she really would like to try I thought that I could arrange it with you.”

The Elephant consented at once, and the Spider having settled where they should meet, left her chortling to herself with glee, tearing up great trees to get into practice, and singing :—

“Hurrah, hurrah, for to-morrow we’ll see,
Who is the stronger, the Hippo, or me.
I’ll leave her in such a terrible plight
She’ll rue all her boasting to-morrow night.”

Early next morning the Spider got a very long, stout rope and tied one end to the Elephant, then he took the other end to the water-side, and tied it to the Hippopotamus. Then he went back to the centre of the rope where it lay slack, and gave them the word to pull, and both started pulling as hard as they could.

Now the Spider was a wicked old thing, as I have told you before, and he could make use of magic which made him stronger than everything and everybody else. So he began chanting the magic words and pulling at the rope himself. Presently the Elephant and the Hippopotamus both got tired, and the Spider was able to drag them nearer and nearer, until at last they came in sight of each

SPIDER, HIPPOPOTAMUS, AND ELEPHANT.

other and found that they were being pulled towards one another by someone else.

Then the Hippopotamus was very angry, and said "I believe the Spider has been playing us a trick," and she told the Elephant that he had called on her, and the Elephant told the Hippopotamus how the wicked old Spider had met her and arranged the tug-of-war.

The Hippopotamus screamed and danced with rage. I am glad I wasn't there, because it must have been so very funny! I expect I should have laughed, and then——well, perhaps, it is better not to think of what would have happened if Mrs. Hippopotamus had heard me. I rather think that she and the Elephant would have had indigestion!

They both raved and rampaged about, and vowed that they would be avenged on the Spider. "We will kill him," they said, "We will kill him, and when he is quite dead and there is no Spider to worry us we will be friends."

"Ha, ha," laughed Mr. Spider to himself, "you have got to catch me first, you forget that I owe you a grudge for eating up all my food at the dinner I gave you." And then he went away and hid, giving out to his friends that he had gone for a rest-cure, and that no letters were to be forwarded, so he had a quiet time to make fresh plans.

Some time afterwards he found an old Hare's skin which had become dried up. "Ho! ho!" he laughed, "just the

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

very thing I wanted," and with that he put the skin over his back, and pulled it tight and sat in the sun until the skin, which was sticky, stuck to him and covered him up like an overcoat. So now he looked like a Hare, and when he met the Elephant she said, "Hullo, Mr. Hare, you do look ill and wrinkled, whatever have you been doing?" Of course, *we* know that it was really the Spider, but the Elephant thought it was the Hare, and could not make out why his skin had become so shrivelled up.

"Ah," said the Spider out of the Hare-skin, "I was very foolish, it was all my fault, I have not long to live," and he pretended to cry.

"Cheer up, man, cheer up," said the Elephant, "Tell me what has happened to you?"

"Oh," said the disguised Spider, "Some weeks ago I quarrelled with the Spider, and he gave me such an awful thrashing. You can see for yourself I am nearly dead. Oh, oh," he groaned, "I wonder if I shall live to get home and say good-bye to my dear wife and babies. I have been trying to crawl back all this time."

"But," said the Elephant, "Do you really mean to say that it was the Spider who brought you to this state?"

"Oh," replied the wicked old story-teller, "The Spider is stronger and more cunning than all of us. Now that he is king, he even wants to thrash the Lion, and the Lion, who is frightened, is hiding from him."

SPIDER, HIPPOPOTAMUS, AND ELEPHANT.

“Good gracious,” said the Elephant thoroughly alarmed, “I am glad I met you.” And off she scampered to the Hippopotamus to tell her the news.

“It is not very healthy in the animal’s town,” said the Hippopotamus, “in future I shall always live in the water.” She was really very much afraid, but she would not own it to her rival.

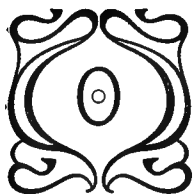
“I believe you are right,” said the Elephant, “but I prefer the forest, and so I shall go and see my parents who live there and have been inviting me for a long time.”

So now you see, although there are many Spiders in the garden, you never meet an Elephant or a Hippopotamus there. The Spider spins his web in peace and sings :

“Oh, how I laugh. He ! he !
What fools these animals be.
If only they knew that my tale is untrue,
Whatever would happen to me ? ”

III.

HOW THE HYAENA WAS BLAMED FOR THE
SPIDER'S WICKEDNESS.



ONCE upon a time there was a dreadful famine, and all the animals suffered very much from hunger and thirst, so afterwards, when there was plenty once more, they thought that they would store up some grain for the winter.

Now the Spider, who, as you know, was their King, suggested that as they had plenty for the winter it would be a good opportunity to travel and see something of the world—and also to go into other people's lands and eat their food, but he did not say that, oh no! he was much too wise.

So when he had called a meeting of the animals it was decided that they should all go away until the winter came, and then they should return and live on what they had stored up in their barn. The Spider made a great speech and said, "Let us enjoy ourselves now and travel about. The time will not be wasted, for although we have never before had to store up food for the winter, I have heard that animals in other countries always do so. Let us try to

HYAENA BLAMED FOR SPIDER'S WICKEDNESS.

find out if this is true." And then he offered a prize to the animal who should bring back the most useful piece of information. So they all got ready—I must say it did not take them very long,—the store-house was closed, the Spider took the key, (it was a magic lock), and they all said "good-bye," and started off.

But the Spider went only a little way with the party, and then he remembered that his wife had a Cousin-Spider right on the other side of the forest, and he said that this was a good opportunity for them to go and see her before going further afield. Of course the wily old thing wanted to get rid of the others, and then it struck him that it would be a good thing to have his wife out of the way too, in case she should interfere with his plans, for I expect that you have already guessed that he was up to mischief as usual !

So they went to his wife's cousin's house and rested there for a few days. Then the Spider said to his wife, "You are so slow, I shall never get anywhere at the rate you walk, and it is very important that I should go further than any of my subjects. A King must never be outdone, he must always set a good example."

Then Mrs. Spider was very sad and said : "Supposing you were to be ill, my dear, or supposing"

"Supposing fiddlesticks," said the Spider, rudely. That is one thing I dislike about Spiders, they are always so nasty to each other. If the husband does not please his

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

wife she eats him up, and if the wife does not please her husband he either kills her or else goes off, like this one did ; and I don't think it is very nice, do you ?

Well, I must get on with my tale. The Spider really went home, but by a different way so that his wife should not know ; and when he was rested—for he always took very good care of himself—he dug a big hole. When he thought it was big enough, he went to the barn and unlocked the door, and every day he stole as much corn as he could carry, and for supper he used to walk back to the store and eat up all the grain that he had spilt, so there was no trace to shew who had stolen it.

By the time he had removed all the corn and had eaten as much as he could—for he really was dreadfully greedy—the summer was over, and winter was near. So away he went to fetch his wife—not that he cared what became of her, but because he was always very careful of appearances (you can see this in the care with which he spins his web), and he did not want any remarks made. So he made up a quite a long story about the wonderful countries he had visited and the marvellous people he had seen. Indeed his story nearly came to a sudden end once, for he was so full of himself and his wonderful doings that he caught one of his feet in a twig and very nearly had to leave one of his legs behind him.

But Mrs. Spider was dead ! She had been so much upset

HYAENA BLAMED FOR SPIDER'S WICKEDNESS.

at his treatment that she did not mind what became of her, and so one day at dinner she swallowed too large a piece of fly, and a leg stuck in her throat, and she choked.

Mr. Spider cried and pretended to be very grieved, but he soon dried his tears. "Just like her," he said, "to go and die because she was annoyed at being left behind. If she had really loved me as much as I loved her she would have been glad to wait anywhere for me. There is no understanding women."

"Poor Man," said the Cousin-Spider, "we did our very best but we could not save her, and now you will be so lonely."

"Of course, I had brought you a present" said the Spider, "to repay you for your kindness to my dear wife, but now that she is dead I have only your word to show how she died. I do not know that she was kindly treated, and so I shall not give you anything. I expect the fly was stale or too much cooked, if the truth were known." He was as mean as he was deceitful and had never really thought of giving her a present at all, so he was not a bit sorry that his wife was dead, but was rejoicing to think that now he would have all the corn at home to himself.

Meanwhile the animals had returned, but they could not open the store-house, of course, without the King's consent. I should have told you that when the Spider had removed all the corn, he went to the Hyæna's den—

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

knowing that she was away with the other animals—and found some of her false hair, and he put this in the barn. “They will think Mrs. Hyaena has done it, she has been caught stealing before, so they will easily believe anything bad of her, and I shall be safe,” said the old rascal to himself.

The animals waited for some time, but after a while they became impatient—it was not like their King to be late for a feast—and they began to call “Spider! Spider”!

For a long time they received no reply, although he was really quite near. Then a faint “Yes” came in answer to their repeated calls. “Yes,” and then nearer, a breathless “Yes, Yes, I am coming,” as if he were hurrying from a long distance.

When he arrived the animals said, “We have been waiting here since the morning; a King should be punctual.”

And the Spider said, “Ah! you will forgive me when I tell you that my dear wife is dead, and I am too heart-broken to mind what anyone thinks. I have been a long, long way off and have only just returned.” Then, seeing the Hyaena, he said, “But my dear Mrs. Hyaena what has happened to your hair? You used to have such a lovely fringe.”

Then the Hyaena blushed and said, “Oh! I don’t know; I must have burnt it.” She did not want all the animals to know that her hair was false.

HYAENA BLAMED FOR SPIDER'S WICKEDNESS.

Of course the animals were all very sorry for the Spider, but they said they were hungry and wanted their share of the corn at once.

So the Spider said, "I am so tired and weak, I will appoint a deputy to open the store for me. Here, Mr. Monkey, I appoint you ; take the key and give us out our corn."

So the Monkey took the key and climbed up into the barn, and when he had opened it and looked in he said, "Good gracious !"

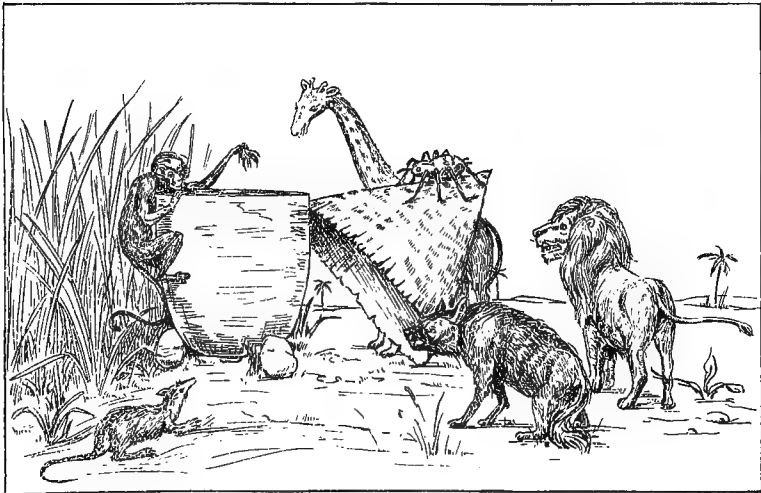
Then all the animals cried out, "Whatever is the matter ?" and the Monkey said, "I cannot tell you, it is too dreadful. Oh ! King, command the Hyaena to give us our corn."

Of course the Spider knew what had happened, but he pretended that he did not, and that he was angry, so he said in a very dignified manner, "It is unusual for the King's Deputy to wish to resign his post, but you have our royal permission to do so," and turning to the Hyaena he said, "Ascend Madam, and report to us."

Now the poor Hyaena was very proud and pleased to do so, but when she had looked in and had seen her false hair there, but no corn, she knew that some one had played her a trick, and she became very confused. "Oh dear ! Oh dear !" she cried, "I do not know who has done this. It was not I, it was not I."

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

Then the Spider said in an injured tone, "It seems I must go myself after all. What a weary thing it is to be a King," and thereupon he climbed up slowly and sadly as if he were not used to it, and expected every step to be his last. When he had looked in, he turned round with a very shocked expression, and seemed ready to faint. "Oh ! Mr. Monkey," he cried, "I do not really wonder now that you were not anxious to report. Ooh ! Ooh ! my poor head ; this is too much," and he reeled and would have fallen, but the Monkey caught him and propped him up against the roof. When the Spider had recovered, he asked



"THE HYAENA HAS CHEATED US !"

HYAENA BLAMED FOR SPIDER'S WICKEDNESS.

the Monkey to be so kind as to look in again and shew the animals what he saw. So the Monkey seized the Hyaena's false fringe and held it up to the assembled company, saying in a loud voice, "The Hyaena is a thief: she has robbed us of all our corn. The Hyaena has cheated us!"

Then the poor Hyeana burst into tears, and sobbed, "It was not I, it was not I," but none of the animals would believe her because she had a very bad name, and they were mad with rage. So they set upon her, and kicked and bit, and beat her, and she would have been killed had she not escaped and run away into the forest, where she is now for all I know to the contrary.

I shall have some more to tell you about the Spider another day, and how he was paid out at last for all his wickedness.

IV.

THE CRAFTY SPIDER REPLENISHES HIS
LARDER.

OW when the Spider had eaten all the corn that he had stolen from the animals' store-house, he was rather at a loss, for his wife being dead, he had no one to help him. The King of the Animals is really only chief in name ; they do not work for him, and only seem to consult him on special occasions, or in times of trouble and anxiety. He sat for a long time pondering in the fashion that we know had given rise to his being elected King.

At last a brilliant idea struck him, and, as usual, it began and ended in mischief. He delighted in taking people in and making them work for him. Oh ! he really was not a nice person to know, that Spider ! and he became greedier and greedier as time went on, which was really very sad, so you must not smile. So, full of his latest plan, he sallied forth, and when no one was about, he set fire to his house ! It makes one shudder to remember all the poor people who have no houses, and to think of that wicked old Spider setting fire to his, just

THE CRAFTY SPIDER REPLENISHES HIS LARDER.

because he was too lazy to—Oh! but I must go on with my tale.

When the house was quite burnt down, the Spider ran along very quickly to the Fowl's house. When he arrived, he sank down in a heap and began crying, "Oh-oo-oo, Oh-oo-oo"—you know the way Spiders cry.

So the Fowl, who was very stupid as most fowls are, did not stop to think whether it was a trick or not, she got so excited, and exclaimed, "Oh, King, Oh, Mr. Spider (silly thing to talk like that!), Oh, cluck! cluck! whatever has brought you to my house?"

But the Spider kept up the game and only wailed more loudly, so the Fowl brought him some water and some corn.

Now when I heard this I thought to myself, well, it would be just like that greedy Spider if he were to choke himself, he is so greedy! But no, he ate as much as he could, and then he pretended to be a little comforted.

"Oh, Mrs. Fowl," he said, "What a treat it is to come across such a dear, kind, sympathetic soul when one is in trouble."

Of course that flattered Mrs. Fowl all the more, and she said "Dear King, do tell me all your troubles. I believe a Lion once helped a Mouse, so I"—and she puffed all her feathers out—"might be so fortunate as to help you."

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

“Well, you see, it is just like this,” said the Spider, “Oh-oo-oo-oo, I can’t speak of it,” and he took another drink. “My house has been burnt down, and Oh-oo-oo what *shall* I do? What *shall* I do?”

“Will you stay here a little while?” said the Fowl. Fowls are really quite kind sometimes. I knew one once—but that is another story.

Now this did not suit Mr. Spider at all, so he said “I could not take advantage of anyone’s kindness like that, dear, dear Mrs. Fowl, but I had thought perhaps you would help me to rebuild my house? I have no one to help me now my dear wife is dead.”

“Why, of course I will; I will come to-morrow morning,” said the Fowl, “but you won’t ask the Wild Cat, will you?”

“How could you imagine I would ask anyone of that class?” said the Spider indignantly, and after thanking her again, he left the Fowl’s house and went—where do you think? Why, as straight as he could go to the Wild Cat’s house.

“Good morning, Mrs. Wild Cat,” said he, “I am in great trouble and I want your help.”

“Dear! dear! how can I help you, and what may your trouble be?” said the Wild Cat.

“Well,” said the Spider, “You have heard of my sad loss,” and he sniffed like the hypocrite he was. “My dear

THE CRAFTY SPIDER REPLENISHES HIS LARDER.

wife was such a good wife, and of course now there is no one to look after the house, and oh ! I can't tell you how miserable I've been. Last night when I was in bed and asleep, I was suddenly roused by a smell of fire, and a horrible crackling sound ; it was as much as I could do to escape. My house is burnt to a cinder. Will you come and help me to rebuild it ? I am asking one or two friends to-morrow morning."

So the Wild Cat said, "Of course, I will come—but I hope you won't mind my asking you—have you asked the Dog ? Because I am afraid of him and could not come if he is coming."

"My dear Mrs. Wild Cat, how *could* you come if the Dog came ? I have *not* asked him. Indeed I want real help, not empty chattering—deeds, not words ! The Dog is much too noisy for my taste."

"Oh ! well, then of course I shall be happy to come," said the Wild Cat.

Quite cheered up, the Spider frisked off, and I hardly like to tell you where he went, but of course I must, because it's part of the story. He went straight to the Dog's house !

The Dog was in rather a hurry : he was just going off, and he didn't much like the Spider at the best of times. "Hullo !" was his greeting, "and what do you want, Mr. Spider ?" The Dog thought as he was so much bigger

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

he need not pay much attention to the Spider. “*King!*” he was overheard to say to Mrs. Dog one night, “a pretty King he is,” and she replied as a dutiful wife should, “I can’t think how they came to elect him King. After all, I think you look much wiser, and we all know you *are*, but I suppose it was jealousy really, there is so much favouritism.”

The Spider saw there was no use in beating about the bush, so he said, “I have been very unfortunate, first my wife died, which was very inconsiderate, and now my house is burnt down and that is even more inconvenient. Will you come and help me to rebuild my house tomorrow? I am arranging a working-bee, and several friends have promised to help.”

“Oh! well,” replied Mr. Dog, “I can’t promise anything just now, but any way, if I can’t come, my wife shall.”

“Oh! that is most kind,” said the Spider, making a bow to Mrs. Dog, “we all know how kind and helpful Mrs. Dog is.”

“But there is one thing,” said the Dog, “stay—have you asked the Hyaena to join your party? I do not care to meet her myself, nor do I allow Mrs. Dog to do so.”

“Why, what do you think of me? Do you wish to insult me?” cried the Spider. “The Hyaena, indeed! You won’t find any of that set anywhere near *my* house,” and he pretended to go off in a rage.

THE CRAFTY SPIDER REPLENISHES HIS LARDER.

Then Mrs. Dog—as the Spider well knew she would—said to her husband, “My dear, one of us must certainly go—it will never do to offend the Spider,” and the Dog (of course he was a wild dog, not a dear old tame English dog, you must remember, and was something of a coward) said, “You are right, as usual, my dear. I quite think *you* should go.”

By this time you will have guessed that the Spider was well on his way to the Hyaena’s house. She was not at home, but little Miss Hyaena (who the Spider rather thought would make a nice second Mrs. Spider) said she would tell her mother, and she felt quite sure she would be only too pleased to help, so the Spider went on.

But he had gone only some few yards when he heard a voice—“Mr. Spider, Mr. Spider,” and turning he saw Miss Hyaena.

“Well, well, my child, and what is it now?” he said in what was meant to be a very pleasing, kindly voice.

“Oh! Mr. Spider,” she panted, “I thought I would just ask you if you had invited the Leopard, because if so, I know my Mother would not come. She is afraid of the Leopard, who has behaved rather badly to us since Father died and we have only Mother to look after us all.”

“Child, child,” said the Spider, “any wish of yours is law to me; don’t worry your pretty head. I am not so

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

friendly with the Leopard that I should ask him to meet any real friends of mine."

"Thank you so much," she said, and returned home quite content.

Presently, on his way to the Leopard's house, the Spider met the Lion, and invited him to come to the great working-bee for the restoration of his house. The Lion feared no one, and he was too noble a beast to find fault with any others who were lending a helping hand to a friend in distress, so he made no enquiries as to who was expected, nor did he stipulate that any special animals should be asked or left out.

The Leopard was quite willing to help, but he said to the Spider, "Don't ask the old Lion. He is such a ponderous old bore; we never agree," and you will have no difficulty in picturing the sweet smile with which the Spider assured him that nothing was further from his thoughts! And he went home well pleased with his day's work.

In the morning the Fowl came very early. "What shall I begin upon, Mr. Spider?" she asked.

"Well, I want some grass tied up into thatch," he said. So the Fowl started tying up the grass.

Presently the Wild Cat arrived, and the Fowl became very agitated. "Oh! Spider, Spider," she cried, "and I

THE CRAFTY SPIDER REPLENISHES HIS LARDER.

begged you so particularly not to ask the Wild Cat. I believe you went straight away and told her."

The Spider said, "Well, don't make such a noise or else she will hear you. Just hide in this grass," and he went across and told the Wild Cat, who promptly rushed over and killed the Fowl.

"Let me put it by for you," said the Spider, and just as they were putting it away the Dog arrived.

"Oh ! Spider, whatever brings the Dog here to-day ?" asked the Wild Cat.

"How should I know ?" said the Spider, "perhaps you'd better hide here while I ask him."

Then he went and met the Dog, and told him that the Wild Cat was in hiding behind some grass. Of course the Dog caught her without much trouble, and soon the Spider was offering to put her body away along with that of the poor Fowl she had killed a few minutes before.

When they had just started to work, who should arrive but the Hyæna ! "Oh ! Spider, don't let her see me," howled the Dog.

"Don't be ridiculous," retorted the Spider, "whoever can see you in all this grass ; really, some people have an absurd idea of their own size and importance."

"Good morning, Mr. Spider, and where shall I begin ?" said Mrs. Hyæna, pleasantly, for a wonder.

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“Over there, I think,” said he. “The grass looks as if it would take some tying up,” and he pointed directly at the spot where the Dog was hiding.

A fearful yell announced that the Hyaena had discovered why the grass looked so tumbled, and in a few minutes she came out with the Dog hanging limply out of her jaws.

“Well, I never!” quoth the Spider, “you *are* energetic! Why, you will have enough food there for a week. What luck some people have to be sure! Let me put your prize aside for you.” But the Hyaena said she was hungry and would like to eat the Dog there and then. However, just as she was preparing to begin her meal, the Leopard arrived, and the Hyaena fled up into the place where the new roof had been commenced.

“Good morning, sir,” said the Leopard. He was rather old-fashioned, and some people said he was affected. They thought he was very conceited, for he always took care that his spots were in the latest fashion. But then I daresay they had a grudge against him.

“Where do you wish me to help you? I shall be pleased to begin.”

“Thank you so much,” said the Spider. “What a thing it is to have such a kind friend. I believe *that* is rather a good place to begin; shall we see?” taking the Leopard straight over to where the Hyaena was crouching.

THE CRAFTY SPIDER REPLENISHES HIS LARDER.

Of course she had no chance, and just as the Spider was helping the Leopard to put his booty away till the work was finished for the day, the Lion appeared.

As the Leopard had said before, they never could agree, and so they flew at each other at once. And while they were fighting, the Spider got a big stick and began beating them with it, and crying out, "Oh ! Leopard leave off ! Oh ! Lion, Lion, do leave off, you are much too great to fight like this."

But he went on beating them all the same, and they went on fighting, till they both dropped down dead ! Now at last the Spider had meat enough and to spare, and as he was collecting it all into his house, he sang—

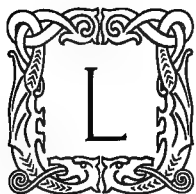
"Ha ! Ha ! He ! He !

Though little I be,

I'm wiser than all these big beasts, you see !"

V.

THE FAIRY BABY.



LONG, long ago there lived a certain man whose wife was very extravagant and spent a great deal of money. He was very good to her, and all went well for a time, and then things began to go badly with them, and at last he had to go and borrow money.

He was very fond of his wife and he did not want to tell her any of his troubles until he was obliged to do so, and I am sorry to say that he was quite afraid she would be angry with him for not making enough money to provide her with the things she thought necessary, instead of sympathising with him in his misfortunes.

One day God sent her a little baby, and her husband was delighted, for he thought "Now she will not be so fond of going out and spending money, she will stay at home and play with the baby, and look after him."

But no, that did not suit her at all, and so when the baby was a few weeks old she left him to take care of himself, and we cannot be surprised to hear that the fairies were so sorry for him that they came and took him

THE FAIRY BABY.

away to Fairyland, and put a changeling in his place. No one guessed what had happened—though people thought the Baby had suddenly become very good, for the changeling was really an old fairy, you see, who was glad to have a rest from his work.

One day when the Baby (as his parents thought him) was left all alone in the house, the Money-Lender came to ask for his money. He knocked and knocked and knocked but received no answer, for the changeling was just asking the Fairy Queen what he should do.

Just as the Money-Lender had decided to go away he heard a voice saying “My father is out, but if you will take *me* to the Court I will claim the money that is due to him from another man, and you shall have it.”

“Who is speaking?” the astonished Money-Lender asked, and when the Baby answered him again from his cradle he was too much surprised to argue, and for a joke replied “Very well, we will go to the people with the mighty mouths that they may judge between us.”

So he picked up the Baby and put him on his back—which is the way they carry babies in Hausaland—and off they went towards the market.

Now they came to some wells, and when the Baby saw them he pulled the Money-Lender’s hair to attract his attention, and said “Put me down, if we want the people

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

with mighty mouths here they are, where shall we find any mouths greater than these ? ”

The Money-Lender was annoyed at being outwitted by a Baby, and said crossly “ Very well, let us go to the people who have studied so much that their eyes are red.” And off they went again.

Soon they came to a small pepper tree, with red and green peppercorns on it, and when the Baby saw it he pulled the Money-Lender’s hair again. Then the man asked angrily, “ What is the matter now ? ” And the Baby replied, “ You said you would take me to the red-eyed people ; are there any whose eyes are redder than peppers ? ”

So the Money-Lender saw that he must try again. “ You are a very trying child,” he said. “ Let us go to those who have large ears that they may hear our cause.” And off they went again.

Presently they came to a pond with water-lilies grow in it. Now, perhaps you don’t know this, but the leaves are very large, and of course the changeling had been making fun of the Money-Lender, so he said, “ Let us stop here.”

Then the man said, “ Nonsense, why should we stop here ? ”

But the Baby replied, “ Surely no one in the world has larger ears than the Water-Lily ! ”

THE FAIRY BABY.

Now the Money-Lender had at first thought to make fun of the Baby, but he soon found it was of no use, so he said, "Oh well, I think we had better go to the King. After all he is the proper person to decide our case."

But when they arrived at the court the King said "I am sorry, but I have no one to shave me, and I cannot think properly unless I am shaved, so I fear you must go away and return another day."

"Not so, O King," the Baby broke in. "Let hot water be brought that I may shave you," and the King laughed and said, "Oh! very well, but you are rather a young barber!"

Now on the way the Baby had picked some branches of ripe red currants, and bringing them out of his pocket he said to the King "If I shave you, will you strip these currants for me, please? I promised to have them done by the time my mother returned home, and if they are not ready she will beat me."

"Very well," replied the King, "one good turn deserves another," and the Baby began to shave him.

When he had finished, the King (who was lazy and really did not want to be bothered) said "Now Baby, you must put the hair back on my face again, and then I shall be able to judge properly between you." Of course he thought that was such an impossible thing that it would settle the matter, and silence both the Baby and the Money-Lender.

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"I will do that with pleasure, O King," replied the Baby quickly, to his surprise, "but first let me see you put back the currants on their stalks."

"Good gracious !" exclaimed the King aghast, "there is no arguing with that Baby. *I* cannot judge between them." And then turning to the Money-Lender, he said "I advise you to take him back to his father's house, and not to press for the money. He is too clever for all of us, and will do us an injury if we offend him."

So the Money-Lender had to make the best of it, for no one was any match for the changeling, and he took the Baby home again.



"HE TOOK THE BABY HOME AGAIN."

THE FAIRY BABY.

The father was very much surprised when the Money-Lender said, "I shall not worry you any more for the money ; as long as your son lives you need not repay me."

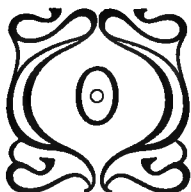
However, of course he was highly delighted, and said, "What have I done to deserve such a clever son ?"

But the mother chimed in : "Don't talk nonsense. Of course the Baby takes after me !"

And she had the last word, for the changeling was far too wise to argue with *her* !

VI.

HAUSATU AND THE ENCHANTED SPIDER.



ONCE upon a time there was a very beautiful girl. She lived in Kano, but the fame of her beauty spread all over the country, and people came from near and far to see her. All the young men fell in love with her, and wished to marry her, but Hausatu—for that was her name—did not wish to be married, and her parents were so fond of her (for she was a very sweet, good girl) that they did not like the thought of parting with her at all.

So her father said that if they gave her to any man as his wife, he must be the cleverest in all the world, though no mere man could possibly be worthy of their darling Hausatu. And he raised a great mound of earth in front of their house, and whenever anyone came to call upon them, he said, “Are you seeking a wife?”

And if they said that they were, then he would reply in a deep, gruff voice, to try and frighten them away, “If you wish to marry Hausatu, you must prove yourself worthy. Whoever wishes to be her husband must first

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clear away this mound of earth that blocks up our front path, and further, he must not eat nor drink anything until all is cleared away, neither must he spit."

You will perhaps wonder why he said this, but in the land where Hausatu lived it is very, very hot, and the people are in the habit of chewing and spitting all the time they are working to keep their lips moist. So Hausatu's father wanted to make the task very hard for any man who wished to marry his daughter, so as to test his character, for he thought that even if he remembered not to eat nor drink, he would be sure to forget and spit; and as the suitor would not be allowed to try more than once, his chance would be gone before he could say a word!

I could not tell you how many young men came and saw Hausatu, and could not make up their minds to try; for they knew how hard a thing it was to do, and feared lest Hausatu's father should impose a further trial of endurance upon them if they were lucky enough to be successful in that one. However, many tried but failed, and Hausatu's father went out every evening to rebuild the mound and replace what the unsuccessful suitors had removed.

Now you know how very crafty the Spider was, and how really clever too, and when he heard of Hausatu's beauty he thought he would like to go and see her with his own eyes. So he changed himself into a handsome young man, and started off on his quest.

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“Truly the girl is most beautiful,” said he to himself, “and what is more, she is so much beloved by her parents that she must be a good daughter ; so *she* is the wife for me.” And nothing daunted by the task to be accomplished before she could be his, the conceited Spider presented himself to her father.

When he had heard all that there was to be done, he asked “If I attempt this, may I sing ?”

“Why certainly,” replied the girl’s father, “every farmer’s lad is allowed to sing. Sing as loudly as you will, and as long ; if you fulfil all the other conditions my daughter shall be yours.” So the Spider went off and arranged to begin very early the next day.

When he was alone again, he took up his quiver, and removing the arrows, he filled it with the remainder of the gruel left over from his breakfast, and put it aside.

As he was going along very early next morning he plucked several corn-stalks and he stripped the ears off, and put the stalks into the quiver which he had slung over his shoulder before starting out. The quiver then looked as if it were full of arrows, and as the father had said he would provide a spade for the work, the Spider carried only a bow in his hand.

Hausatu had suggested that her parents should supply the spade as she feared magic ; so that is why the Spider did not take his own.

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"Good morning, Mr. Arurururuwi," said Hausatu, for that was the name the Spider had given himself for the occasion, "I hope you will not find the task too difficult." For you must remember he was now a handsome young man, and Hausatu rather liked him.

"Good morning, Little One," said the Spider, "don't you trouble your pretty head about that, but just get your preparations made for the wedding! I am sure to satisfy your father, and I have left all prepared at home to receive you on our return after the ceremony. Very, very soon I shall say, Here is Mrs. Arurururuwi.'" So Hausatu blushed and ran away into the house to tell her mother, and just then her father came out.

"Good morning to you, Mr. Arurururuwi," he said. "I wonder how you will fare to-day!"

"Why," laughed the Spider, "as I have just told your daughter, *I* shall have won a wife before many hours are over, and *you* will have gained a son-in-law."

Now wasn't it just like the Spider to say that? If he had said, "You will have *lost* a daughter," Hausatu's father would have been in a bad temper right away!

"By the way," he added, "I shall keep my quiver on: in these troublous times it is not safe to lay it aside for a moment, even while one is working."

"Certainly," said Hausatu's father, "I see you are a brave man, and a brave man is always prepared."

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Then the Spider seized the spade and set to work, singing :

“ I am the cleverest man on earth,
I rouse the folk to music and mirth,
I'm always happy, I'm always gay,
And so I shall be on my wedding day.
Hurrah, hurrah, and a hip, hip, hip,
With a tupp, tupp, tupp, and a tip, tip, tip.”

Now when he said “ tupp, tupp, tupp,” and “ tip, tip, tip,” he was really spitting, only no one guessed. So you can see why he asked if he might sing !

Hausatu and her parents were so excited when they heard the word ‘ wedding-day,’ that of course they all began talking together, and all at once, and so never heard the Spider spitting.

Soon the sun got very hot, and the Spider's throat became very parched and dry, and he began to feel rather sorry for himself, so he said aloud “ This is quite a good opportunity to dry the poison on my arrows.” And he shut one eye, and put his head down to the quiver as if he were choosing a particular arrow, but really he was sucking up the gruel through the corn-stalk !

Then he sat down and rested for a few minutes, and when he got up again he was as fresh as ever, and soon cleared the mound right away. Hausatu and her parents could hardly believe it when they opened the door, and saw the

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ugly mound of earth had disappeared. But of course they knew that now their happy days together had come to an end, so there was nothing to be done but to prepare for the parting. They were all so sad at supper, to which the Spider had been invited, that he was very much annoyed indeed, though he thought he had better conceal his vexation as best he could, in case the parents should make his bad temper an excuse for not letting their daughter go with him even at the last moment.

However, her father stood up and told all the relatives who had been invited to supper to meet the Spider, that as he had accomplished what he and his wife had thought and hoped to be an impossibility, there was nothing for it but to allow him to marry their daughter.

After supper the Spider produced a sort of banjo that he could play rather well, and he sang and made himself so agreeable that everyone liked him, and said what a lucky girl Hausatu was, for she had been won by a very nice fellow after all !

The Spider had brought ever so many pats of butter and rolls of bread with him, for where he lived the bread-fruit and shea-butter grew upon trees, and so all he had to do was to gather as much as ever he could carry. He gave presents of bread, butter, salt, rice and beans, to his father and mother-in-law, and all sorts of lovely jewellery and fine clothes to his bride, and so they were quite cheered up.

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Now when he first took her home the Spider was quite afraid he was going to have trouble with his wife ; for though such a sweet-tempered girl, she could be very disagreeable when she chose. And she did not like the look of their new home a bit at first.

“Where is your house ? ” she asked.

“This is *our* house, my dear,” replied her husband, passing his hands over her eyes, and when she looked again somehow the webs seemed to have changed. They did not look quite so flimsy, in fact one big one, which covered the two smaller ones, seemed quite like a strong tent. It did not look too substantial, but the material was beautifully soft and silky.

“How lovely,” cried Hausatu, and just then the sun shone brightly on one corner, and the web glistened with all the most glorious colours you can imagine.

“Do you like it ? ” asked the Spider, “because I can get you as much as ever you wish of that material.”

“I don’t think I ever saw anything more lovely ! Now I come to examine it, of course I can see how very strongly it is woven,” said Hausatu, apologetically. “Oh ! what an *exquisite* pattern, I should love to have a dress of it ! It is too lovely for a tent ! ”

The Spider was amused as well as pleased at his wife’s enthusiasm. He wondered what she would say if she knew that he had not only made it himself, but had provided

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the material out of his own body ! But he did not want to tell her too much at once ; he was a wily old thing !

So Hausatu settled down in her new home, and all went as merrily as wedding-bells, and every afternoon Mr. and Mrs. Arurururuwi sat in their best parlour to receive their friends' congratulations, and to show them their many lovely presents. The Spider had spun such beautiful new webs, and he had so bewitched Hausatu that she was as proud of them as a proper Mrs. Spider would have been, and they were very happy. Every morning he went out to work, and when he came home Hausatu had dinner ready, and the web all nicely dusted and *so* comfortable.

Have you ever tried sleeping in a Spider's web ? It *is* so soft and cosy !

After a time a little baby-daughter was born to the Spider and his wife, and oh ! they were so pleased. She was such a sweet little creature, and as good as gold. Her father used to delight in spinning pretty webs for her, and she had more frocks than any of the other babies in the neighbourhood, and they were far prettier too. The Spider loved to play with her, and she would curl up into a ball, and tuck all her little arms and legs together, and crow and laugh back at him, and suddenly jump up and run off to her newest web !

The mother and father were so devoted to the little

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one that they took it in turns to work, so that one of them should always be free to play with the baby.

They went on like this and were ever so happy, till one day a nasty old woman from the village happened to be passing just when Hausatu had gone down to the river. The Spider was alone, playing and singing to his little girl, he was off his guard, and was singing :—

“Your father when he went to woo
Was set a difficult task to do,
He had to dig, he had to work—
And that is a thing all Spiders shirk.
With a tupp, tupp, tupp,
And a tip, tip, tip,
He did not go thirsty
With gruel to sip.

“For in his quiver was food and drink,
That was not fair, perhaps you think?
But all is fair in love and war,
Love laughs at locksmith, laughs at door.
With a tupp, tupp, tupp,
And a tip, tip, tip,
He did not go thirsty
With gruel to sip.”

The wicked old wretch did not say anything for a day or two, but she kept watch every morning when it was the spider's turn to play nurse, and when she had

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heard him singing several days running, she thought it was time to speak. Of course she was the kind of person who just loved making trouble.

So off she went to the river where Hausatu used to get the water to fill all the jugs for the day, and when Hausatu appeared she said, "Child, I grieve to say you have been horribly deceived. Your husband lied to your father and you. He did not fast all day, as you thought, when he was clearing the mound away. Oh! no. He had gruel in the quiver which he sucked up when no one was looking, and, moreover, when he sang 'Tupp, tupp, tupp!' he was really spitting."

"How disgusting—besides it was forbidden!" gasped Hausatu. "But there, I know you; you are old Mrs. Busybody, and I don't believe a word of it."

"You can prove it my dear," said the other with a sneer. "You have only to go back directly, before your husband expects you, and you will probably hear him telling your little daughter all about it. He was actually singing a song to her of what he had done, and laughing as I passed."

"The wretch," exclaimed Hausatu, and she let all the jugs fall, and rushed off home at once, where she arrived just in time to hear her husband singing as he tossed the baby up in his arms:

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

“Your father when he went to woo,
Was set a difficult task to do.
He had to dig, he had to work—
And that is a thing all Spiders shirk.
With a tupp, tupp, tupp,
And a tip, tip, tip,
He did not go thirsty
With gruel to sip.

“For in his quiver was food and drink.
That was not fair——”

“It wasn’t, it wasn’t,” shrieked Hausatu in a perfect fury. “Horrible wretch ; heartless - cruel - cold-blooded - deceitful - wicked - nasty - disgusting - old - creature. You cheat ! you cheat !” And she threw herself on the ground, and tore her hair, and sobbed with rage.

I’ve never seen anyone in such an awful passion before, and I never want to again. Oh ! it was dreadful. Before the Spider could say a word she had snatched up the Baby, and drawing her hand over the web had torn it to shreds. “There !” she said, and stamped her foot so hard, right on his toes. “There ! there !” as she threw the baby’s toys at him. “I’m going home, I *am* ; all your cunning shall not stop me. I have done with you for ever.” And she began to sob, “I could never have believed it, but oh ! I heard it, I heard it myself,” and away she ran, crying and sobbing, and never stopped till she got home.

HAUSATU AND THE ENCHANTED SPIDER.

Her parents were naturally very much distressed, when she returned to them in such a state, and could not imagine whatever had happened to upset her so.

"There, there, there, my darling," said her mother softly, crooning over her as if she were once more their little child, "never mind, it will all come right."

And her father took his little grandchild, and went off to get her some nice warm milk, for he was so afraid she might be cold. When Hausatu fled from the Spider, you remember, she just picked up her baby, and never stopped to put on its shawl or outdoor clothes.

Later on, when Hausatu was rested and comforted a little, she told her father and mother how Arurururuwi had wickedly deceived them.

Her mother was very indignant, and said she must not think of going back to a man who had treated them all so shamefully, adding that they had never wanted her to be married, and would be only too delighted to have her at home again.

"Softy, softly, my good woman," said her husband, "we must first find out how the misunderstanding and quarrel arose. I feel sure Arurururuwi will be able to give us a satisfactory explanation."

"Oh, he'll explain it all, never fear," retorted Hausatu bitterly, "but it will be some time before *I* believe anything he says again, and I won't go back ; I won't, I

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won't ;" and she terrified her parents so by screaming and jumping about, that they promised her she should return only of her own free will.

Now the Spider kept very quiet, and never went near them. It is true he had as much as he could do to repair his wrecked house. In fact, after looking sadly at it for some time, he decided it would be easier to build an entirely fresh one. So he set to work at once, for he felt so lonely and miserable without his wife and baby, that he was glad of something to occupy his thoughts. It took him several days to finish it all off, and he made it even prettier than before, hoping Hausatu would be pleased when she returned. For he felt sure she was so fond of him that she would soon long to come back, and then it would be an easy task to persuade her to do so.

In due course the house was finished, and lovely it looked inside and out. The web was fine and silky, just like gossamer, which you know is the substance that Fairies' wings are made of, and the Spider embroidered it with fresh dew drops. He arranged them all round the porch, and oh ! how they glistened when the sun was shining.

He was rather friendly with the Fire-flies, and he arranged with them to come and serenade his wife when he should have persuaded her to return home. They promised that they would all light up, and give her a splendid welcome, and a torchlight procession to finish up with.

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“But,” said the Chief of the Fire-flies, “surely you will punish old Mrs. Busybody for her interference?”

“Rather,” said the Spider laughing, “you need not worry any more over her, for I went last night and spun webs all over her best drawing-room curtains. It was rather exhausting, but I was well repaid when I heard her remarks this morning, and besides, my Cousin-Spider, who dislikes her as much as I do, is staying near. He has promised me that as soon as ever a web is dusted down he will hurry to the spot and spin another.”

“Ha ! ha ! ha !” laughed the Fire-flies, “that is a good joke ; old Mrs. Busybody won’t live long now, for she can never leave a Spider’s web alone, and we shall soon hear that the worry of keeping her house free of them has killed her.”

“That’s something, certainly,” said the Spider, “so much for old Mrs. Busybody, but, unfortunately, there are dozens like her, and so there will always be someone ready to take her place !”

Hausatu and her parents wondered what had happened to the Spider, for they quite thought he would have come very soon to take his run-a-way wife home. Hausatu was not happy, and did not seem to take any interest in anything, not even in her dear little baby.

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"I cannot stand this any longer," said her mother to the father. "The child is fretting; you must do something."

"That's all very well, but what can I do?" he retorted. "I've a good mind to go and see that wretched fellow and ask him what it all means."

"Oh! no, don't do *that*," said his wife, "it would be very lowering to your dignity."

"Well, what am I to do, then?" demanded her husband testily. "You say 'do something,' and 'something must be done,' yet directly I suggest anything you cry 'Oh! no, don't do that.' For heaven's sake propose something yourself."

"When you have calmed down a little," said his wife, in her most dignified tone, "I will certainly tell you what I think would be best. Send a note to Arurururuwi and tell him to come here to us immediately. Don't say a word about Hausatu being with us, and don't let him suspect that we know anything. He is very sharp: we must be wary."

So they agreed to do this, and the note was sent.

"Perhaps he won't come, and I shall have to go, after all," said Hausatu's father.

"Oh! rubbish," said his wife. "Give the man time. Do you expect him to *fly* here?"

HAUSATU AND THE ENCHANTED SPIDER.

“No, but I should think he is crawling,” replied her husband, which was just what the Spider *was* doing, if they’d only known.

Next day the Spider, who was overjoyed at receiving the letter, set off to Hausatu’s home, where he arrived in the early morning. No one was up, so he began singing :—

“I was the happiest man on earth,
Wherever I went there was music and mirth.
I was quite happy, and I was quite gay,
But I was most glad on my nuptial-day.
And now my dear wife has been lost to me,
Because of the tales of Old Busybodie.”

Now when Hausatu heard this, she felt sure she must have misjudged him, but hark ! there he goes again—

“I loved my wife, and my wife loved me,
And happy we’d be but for Busybodie.”

And she couldn’t bear it any longer, especially when the Baby-Spider sat up and uncurled itself, and began calling and crooning “Aru-Ari,” which was the nearest it could get to its father’s name. For Baby-Spiders call their parents by name, as soon as ever they can speak.

So Hausatu snatched her up and rushed down to welcome him. She fell into his arms, and when he began explaining she would not let him say a single word. Instead, she asked him to forgive her for being such a stupid as to allow any Mrs. Busybody to interfere between them, and spoil their happiness.

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Now the Spider was really overjoyed, for he loved Hausatu as much as any Spider could love anyone. It might not suit you, and I don't think it would suit me, but that is beside the point; *she* was quite satisfied, so they sat down and played with the baby until Hausatu heard her parents moving about; and then she said she must go in and prepare the breakfast, as she had done each morning ever since her return.

"Stay," said Mr. Spider. I think we can really call him "*Mr. Spider*" now, for it seems as if he had turned over a fresh leaf, and really meant to be good for the future. "Stay, my dear," and searching in his pockets—such funny pockets they were—"I have brought you some bread and butter from our part of the world. I gathered it fresh out of the garden, and so you will not need to cook any breakfast, for I rather think our parents will prefer this."

The father and mother were delighted when they found that the quarrel had been made up. Hausatu's father told the Spider privately that he had been on the point of coming to see them when Hausatu arrived; and as her parents had never yet paid them a visit, it was arranged that, after Hausatu and Mr. Spider and the baby were rested, they should all go back together.

Mr. Spider mentioned casually at supper that he had taken advantage of his wife's absence to erect and furnish a

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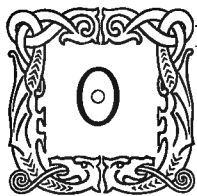
brand new house in a spot she had often admired. And Hausatu, remembering how she had wrecked the other one, could only look gratefully at her husband, for words failed her, but her mother said how glad she was to hear it.

“I no longer have any fears for your happiness,” she said, “for very few husbands are like Arurururuwi.”

And I think we can all agree with her !

VII.

THE HUNTER AND THE FAIRY BUFFALO.



ONCE upon a time, long, long ago, when men first began to hunt animals for food, there was a clever Buffalo who understood their language (for she had been friendly with them before they became hunters), and she also knew how to change herself into a beautiful girl.

Now the Chief of the town near which the Herd lived, was a very clever man, and he had a son called Mahalbi of whom he was very fond. When the son grew up he took him Buffalo-hunting with him. They were such good hunters that the Buffaloes became very frightened, fearing that they all would soon be killed unless something could be done to put a stop to the hunting parties. So they held a great council to consider what was best to be done.

The clever Buffalo-Girl said that several times when she had been to the town, after changing herself into a woman, she had seen the Chief and his son.

“ Oh, why did you not listen and try to find out their plans, since you alone of us understand their language ? ” demanded the Queen of the Buffaloes.

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“Madam I did so,” replied the Buffalo-Girl, “but alas ! I could not find out anything, for the Chief is so wise, he never talks about his plans. He is, as you know, a cautious man, and his son, who is a good youth, is content to do as his father bids him.”

“Alas ! alas !” cried the Queen, “I had such hopes when I saw you rise to answer me, and now they are dashed to the ground. My poor children what can I do for you ?”

One of the older courtiers who had known the Queen from babyhood said “Ah, Madam, if only you had been content to marry the Chief of the other Buffaloes, we might have been strong enough now to withstand our enemies.”

“Silence !” snapped her majesty, “since you have no advice to offer us, we will dispense with your remarks.” She could be very severe and dignified, couldn’t she ?

But now the young Buffalo-Girl who spoke men’s language said “May it please Your Majesty I have thought of a plan.”

“Unfold it, unfold it,” cried the anxious Queen, hastily.

“Madam, as you know, I have a charm, which my dear mother gave me, and by its aid I can transform myself into a woman. Now it is not permitted to a Buffalo-Girl to go and live in a house, and so I could not get many opportunities of overhearing Mahalbi and his father

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talking together. Would it be possible for Your Majesty to allow me to remain in their house for a few days so that I might try again to find out their plans and"—here she lowered her voice and looked round to see if there were any people in the Queen's tent whom she could not quite trust, for there is a great deal of jealousy everywhere, and Buffaloes are not by any means free from it, "and," she continued mysteriously, "I might be able to upset their plans, or even to kill them as they have killed so many of us."

"My child, you give me hope again," cried the Queen, "of course you shall go, When so much is at stake the laws must be modified. Is it not so, O ! People of the Buffaloes ?" And a murmur of assent arose from the assembly.

"Very well, then, that is settled. Come here my child." And the young Buffalo-Girl came and knelt before her majesty.

"We would wish you to go well provided," said the Queen, "and since we do not ourselves wear clothes such as these mortals wear, we must needs give you a gift to present to them of the best that we have." And, turning to her Chamberlain, she ordered him to bring out seven of the best Buffalo hides in the royal treasury.

For when Buffaloes die, their relatives save their skins to wear on very special occasions. That is, perhaps, one

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reason why they grieve so when a member of the Herd is killed, for the hunter naturally takes the hide away, and so it is a double loss to the relatives.

While the Chamberlain was getting the hides—and it took him some time for he had to get the key of the treasury where all the skins were kept, for being those of members of the royal family, they were very valuable indeed—the young Buffalo-Girl craved permission to retire, so that she might make use of the charm in secret, and become a woman.

This being granted she went to her own cave, which was quite near the Court as she was of very good family herself. Having shut herself in so that no one could see or hear anything, she took the charm out of its hiding place and chanted the magic song. No one knows quite what it was, but it was something like this :—

“Change me to a woman fair,
Eyes of blue and golden hair,
Cherry lips and ivory skin,
Not too fat and not too thin.
Let the Chief's son marry me
So I may his magic see.”

By the time she had sung this through she had changed into a most lovely girl. She looked so sweet and fair, and had such an amiable expression, I'm sure you would have loved her if you had seen her. She had on the

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richest garments, and looked for all the world like a fairy Princess, with her golden chains round her neck and wrists, and long ear-rings in her ears.

The Queen was delighted when she saw her, and threw a couple of the Buffalo-skins over her shoulders with her own royal hands, and that was the finishing touch. She looked quite regal. All the Buffaloes crowded round to say "good-bye" to her as soon as the Queen had kissed her and bidden her farewell, for it was decided that she should go alone, so as not to arouse anyone's suspicion, lest her secret should be discovered, and all the people guess that she was not a real girl. So they took her as far as the edge of the camp, and it was decided that she should rest there for the night, and go to the town very early next morning before it was light, and as a further precaution the Buffaloes went deeper into the forest. Of course being really a Buffalo made a deal of difference, for she was much stronger than an ordinary girl, and could run very much faster.

In the morning when she entered the town, she went at once to the Chief's house, and asked to see him. He was very much surprised to see such a beautiful girl all alone at that hour of the morning, and was curious to know what had brought her to his town, and what she wanted him to do for her.

"My story is a sad one, Mighty Chief," she said.

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"Long, long ago, I lost my dear father, and my mother died when I was born. I was the child of a Chief as brave and noble as yourself, and now I am alone and friendless, I crave your sympathy and help."

"Poor child," said the Chief, "stay here awhile and rest. Do not attempt to tell us your story since it distresses you so much"—for she had begun to cry. "I can see you are as noble as you are lovely ; only king's children are dressed as you are."

"May you be repaid, O Generous Chief, for your kindness," she sobbed, pretending to be utterly worn out and wretched, whereas her heart was nearly bursting with rage, and she was longing to turn into a Buffalo, and suddenly gore the Chief to death. She could not help thinking of the many members of her tribe who had met their fate at his hands.

"Some day perhaps, you will tell me all your story," he replied, "and we will see what can be done, for I am afraid you must have suffered from the treachery of someone."

"Indeed, indeed, you speak but the truth, My Lord," she cried. "My father was most treacherously killed, and dear brothers and sisters, and——" Here she choked with rage at the thought of the many relatives who had been hunted down.

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“ There, there, my dear,” said the Chief, thinking that her griefs were the cause of her distress, though *we* know it was mostly rage, “ don’t try to talk now ; go and rest.”

And he bade his servants do all they could for her, and he had the best rooms prepared for her as if she were a very honoured guest indeed. She stayed quite a long time, and whenever anyone attempted to find out who she was or where she had come from, she began to cry, and pretended she was too much upset to talk about it.

Now Malhabi, the Chief’s son, was very much in love with the maiden, indeed he had thought of asking her to be his wife directly he saw her, for she was really a most beautiful woman. Day by day every one became fonder and fonder of her, for she seemed as sweet as she was lovely. Ah ! Had they only known her *real* thoughts !

At last Malhabi went to his father and told him how much he loved the maiden, and his father sympathised with him, and owned that he, too, thought her very charming. But he did not wish his eldest son to marry a maiden of whoso people they knew nothing, so he said he must think it over ; and Malhabi went away quite sad.

Now the Chief was very fond of his son and could not bear to see him looking so miserable. So he consulted with the Wise-Men of the town, and they all said that they hoped Malhabi would be allowed to marry the maiden.

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“For,” said one old man, “we are so used to seeing her pretty face now, that we should miss it dreadfully if she went away, but of course we cannot expect to keep her here unless Malhabi marries her, for all maids become wives when they are as good and as pretty as she is, and one can see that she is of royal or princely family ; so since there is no one but Malhabi to wed her here, it follows we shall lose her to a neighbouring Chief one of these days.”

This point of view had never struck the Chief, and when someone else got up and said that the town had been very lucky and prosperous since the maiden’s arrival, he was quite persuaded to let the marriage take place, and to trust to luck for the future.

“When she is happy and safe in her own home here, she will be the more ready to tell us about the events which proved lucky to us in bringing her here, although they were the misfortunes of a life to her, poor child,” he argued with himself.

So he sent for Malhabi and told him that he no longer had any objections to the match, and that he should be happy to receive the maiden as his daughter.

“We will try and make her so happy that she will forget all her troubles,” he added, and Malhabi, overjoyed at the prospect, went off at once to find the maiden.

When he told her how much he loved her and hoped

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she would be his wife, she was secretly overjoyed, for as we know, it was with that very object in view that she had changed herself into a girl and left her people. But she was artful and pretended to be shy.

“Oh Prince,” she said to please him, for he was only a Chief’s son (I expect she knew that even better than you and I!) you do me honour, indeed, indeed I am grateful,” and she began to cry softly, “a poor maiden, friendless and alone——”

“Hush, hush, my love,” said he, “you shall never be friendless or alone again as long as I live, and as for the honour—come, dry your tears and let us go and hear what the Chief, my father, has to say. *We* shall be honoured indeed Princess, if you consent to stay with us.”

She was always called ‘Princess,’ for though she had never actually told the people she was a Princess, she had never corrected anyone who had so addressed her ; consequently it came to be an understood thing that she really was one, and that satisfied most people.

The old Chief gave them his blessing, and ordered everything to be prepared immediately for the very grandest wedding that had ever been seen in that part of the land.

There were feasts every day for a week and dances every night, and the whole town was illuminated. In addition to the fairy lights, which one would of course

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expect all *fairy* Princesses to have at their wedding ceremonies, this bride, who was akin to the animals, had swarms of Fire-flies in attendance, who came out and lined the streets on the night of the State Ball which ended the festivities. The people thought it was because of her sweet nature which had conquered even the insects and made them her slaves, but *we* know better than that !

When they had been married a little while the Princess thought she had better try to find out the secret of Mahalbi's success when Buffalo-hunting, for not being a real woman, life in the town did not suit her, and it was beginning to tell upon her nerves. She longed for the free life in the wilds once more, and she could not bear to see the dead Buffaloes brought in after each hunt. So one night she asked Mahalbi how he accounted for his luck.

He pretended to be very indignant. "Luck, do you call it ?" he said. "Why, my father and I are the best hunters for many miles round."

"Oh ! I daresay you can hunt well," said the Princess, "but I have always heard that the Buffalo is difficult, very difficult to kill. Are you never afraid, Mahalbi ? Their horns look so cruel to me," she shivered, "I should simply dread being gored to death."

Mahalbi laughed. "Oh ! that comes of being a woman, you see : men are not like that, and besides, of course, we have charms !"

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There, the secret was out !

“Charms—what are they ?” asked the Princess.
“How odd. Do tell me all about them—I love anything strange, and especially when it has to do with your safety, dear husband.”

Now if Mahalbi had been wise he would have said he was tired and wanted to go to sleep ! But the Princess had such a way with her, there was no keeping a secret once she had suspected it and wanted to know it.

“There are various charms,” he said, trying to change the subject, “I always use one to keep dry when I go fishing for instance. If you are so interested, dearest, won’t you come with me some time and I will show you how to work it, too ?”

“Why, of course I will, how lovely to be sure,” cried the Princess, “but I like hunting better than fishing,” hastening to add as she saw Mahalbi’s look of surprise, “that is, I mean, I am more interested in hunting. Of course I know nothing of either sport really.”

“I see,” said he rather doubtfully.

“Well, what do you do when you go hunting ? Do tell me,” she pleaded, “it can’t make any difference now that I am your wife.”

“Well I suppose it cannot really,” said Mahalbi rather reluctantly, “but we don’t tell our women things of that

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kind in this town, it is not the custom. However, you are different, aren't you ? ”

“ Yes, yes of course I am,” cried the Princess eagerly, with more truth than he knew.

“ When we go hunting Buffalo, we can change into an ant-hill or a stump in the road, or a ri——” and he broke off for he heard his father coming in late from a Council Meeting, and he suddenly wished he had asked him before telling the Princess about the charms. He was a good son, and force of habit made him still consult his father, and the Princess was too sensible or too indifferent to mind as a rule.

A few days after, the Princess proposed that they should have a picnic. Now no one had ever heard of such a thing before. The younger people all thought it a splendid idea and were most enthusiastic, but the older ones shook their heads and said “ What a difference a sense of security makes to a person, Princess or peasant it is all the same.” And they wondered what other outlandish forms of amusement she would introduce now she was Mahalbi's wife and secure in her position.

Some of the girls who had hoped Mahalbi would one day marry one of them, said how sorry they were for him, for nothing is so trying to a man as a wife who upsets his friends and cannot agree with his relations !

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This was only spitefulness, for the Princess was really as popular as ever.

The preparations for the picnic went on apace, and the Chief, who was as devoted as ever to the Princess, told his son to spare no trouble nor expense to make the first picnic a grèat success.

When the day came, it was bright and warm, and just sunny enough to be pleasant, and they started off very early in the morning, for where Mahalbi lived it was too hot to go about after the sun was well up. There were several bullock-carts full of provisions, and Mahalbi took a tent for the Princess to rest in. They went some distance into the country, and then they stopped and had refreshments. They played all sorts of games, and the Princess, who was popular before, simply won all hearts that day, for nothing could exceed her gentleness and good temper, and she had a kind word for everyone. The plan was to rest in the heat of the day, returning to the town when it became cool again.

Now while they were resting, the Princess was suddenly seized with a desire to visit her own people and see how they were getting on. She hoped to explain to them why she had stayed so long without helping them—for she was really an honest Buffalo, though a deceitful Woman—and she was afraid the Queen of the Buffaloes would think she was so happy in her new life that she

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had forgotten all about them. So she got up and put the charm in the bosom of her dress, and was slipping quietly out of the tent when Mahalbi sprang up and asked why she was going out into the sun.

“It won’t hurt me,” she said, scornfully. “What is the use of being a King’s daughter and the wife of a Chief’s son, if one has to stay in because of a little heat, just like the common people?”

“Just as you like,” retorted Mahalbi. “Of course if you go, I go too. But I should like to know where you are going, my dear, if you don’t mind.”

“I am only going for a stroll towards the forest,” she answered, and, as a plan formed in her mind, she added quickly “do come, dear, I shall be glad of your company.”

Mahalbi said, “Of course I will,” and picking up his quiver, followed her out of the tent.

“What on earth are you taking that for?” she asked.

“One never knows in this part of the land what one may meet : there are Lions and Hyaenas, to say nothing of Buffaloes.”

“What’s the use of your charm then?” enquired the Princess.

“Well, it would be of no use to you, my dear,” said her husband. “However, I don’t suppose I shall want them,” and he threw them down, and off they strolled.

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As they passed a big tree the Princess slipped round the far side of it, and pulling the charm out of her dress she turned into a Buffalo.

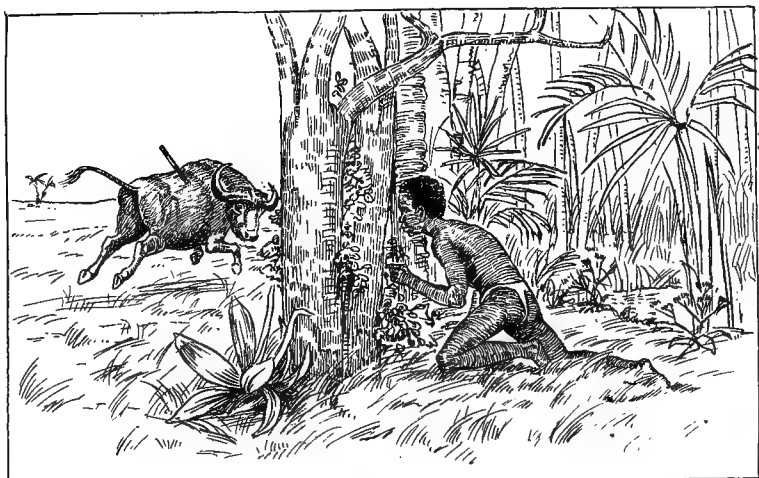
Quick as thought Mahalbi, now defenceless, changed himself into an ant-hill. It was not a moment too soon, for the Buffalo charged down upon him, and he had barely time to change into the stump of a tree.

Now the Princess forgot that Mahalbi had been about to tell her of yet a third charm—for you will remember that he got as far as “ri—” and stopped when his father’s footsteps disturbed them—or else perhaps she had not noticed it ; anyhow she rushed at the tree-stump to gore it, but Mahalbi sprang aside and transformed himself into a ring.

“Wherever can he be now ?” wondered the Buffalo, and she went nosing the grass, while poor Mahalbi was shivering in his sandals—that is if he had kept them on—and I don’t suppose there was any too much room in the ring. Suddenly—whirr ! whiz ! crash ! and down went the Buffalo with an arrow in her side. But she scrambled up again, bellowing with rage, and rushed off into the forest, for she had dropped the charm, and could never again become a Princess.

One of the Chief’s friends had seen Mahalbi leave his tent with his bride, and not considering the country too safe he had thought it best to follow them at a distance. Unlike the Chief’s son, he was on the same side of the tree

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THE BUFFALO BELLOWED AND RUSHED OFF INTO THE FOREST.

as the Princess, and had seen her change into a Buffalo and charge Mahalbi. At first he thought it was just a game, and was wondering if he should go back, for since he had seen her magic he said to himself "the Princess is well able to look after herself and her husband, and if any wild beast comes out I shall be the only person in danger." But when he saw Mahalbi spring up and disappear twice (for he had to take his natural form again each time before changing into the stump or the ring) he thought it time to interfere, and let fly an arrow which struck the Buffalo as we know.

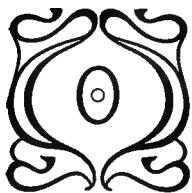
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Of course everyone was very much grieved at the loss of their sweet Princess, but after all, as they said, things might have been worse. She had really only done them good, though her intentions were undoubtedly evil, and had she succeeded in carrying them out, the consequences would have been dreadful.

THE THIEVING SPIDER CAUGHT BY THE HALF-MAN.

VIII.

HOW THE THIEVING SPIDER WAS CAUGHT BY THE HALF-MAN.



ONE day the Spider pretended that he was going to be very busy, so he told his wife to make him some ground-nut and palm-fruit sandwiches for his lunch, as he should be away the whole day at the farm which he had bought. So she cooked the nuts and salted them, and put oil on them, and made some very tasty sandwiches for her husband.

“I should like to come down and see you at work,” she said, “when I have finished what I have to do here, and we could walk back together in the evening.”

But that did not suit the Spider at all, he had no intention of letting his wife know any of his plans.

“How sweet of you to think of it my dear, but I could not let you come all that long way by yourself, it would never do. I should not have a minute’s peace, and I should never get any work done, for I should be wondering all the time where you were, and how far you

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had got on your way. You shall see the farm one day, never fear," he continued, patting her softly on the back, "but it will look much prettier when it is all in order and the corn is sprouting. And now I must be off."

So he stowed away his sandwiches, shouldered his hoe, and started off, singing as usual :—

"Ho, ho ! ha, ha ! ho, ho ! he, he !
A Spider's wife at home must be ;
She must not interfere with me,
Lest she and I should not agree."

When he had gone some little way, the Spider turned off the main road and plunged into the forest. He knew a place where there was a pool, and he began to feel rather thirsty, so he thought he would take a little rest, and have a nice cool drink from the pool. "The sandwiches are very heavy," he thought to himself. "Perhaps I might as well eat one or two now, it is no use carrying them, and I may meet someone who will ask me home to dinner."

The truth was that he was really a very lazy, greedy Spider, so as he turned into the forest he found a nice leafy spot where it would be safe to leave anything, and then he hid his hoe there, for he had never had any idea of really working, and only came away because he thought he could get a better meal. The night before, Mrs. Spider had timidly hinted that there was not very much food left, and it was time her husband set about getting some more.

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So the wily Spider thought he would pretend to be working hard on his farm, knowing that his wife would certainly make up something in the way of refreshment for him to take with him.

So he strolled on leisurely, and presently he came to the pool. It was a lovely spot, dark and cool, such as Spiders love, and he sat and ate his sandwiches one by one until he came to the last !

“It is certainly no use carrying one sandwich about with me all day,” he said to himself as he looked at it. “I may as well finish it too. My wife *can* make sandwiches,” and then he rolled over on his side and was soon fast asleep.

You will be wondering what had become of Mrs. Spider all this time. Poor little thing, she was rather lonely, for when her husband had gone, she had very little to do to amuse herself. When once the babies were washed and dressed they lay in their little webs and slept again by the hour together. They were specially good children when they were little, and every one loved them. Grand-mamma and Grandpapa Spider often came over to see them, for of course they were quite devoted to them. They were Mrs. Spider’s parents, and lived quite near their daughter, and it happened that soon after the Spider had left home, Mrs. Spider heard someone knocking very softly. She ran to the door at once, for the babies were as usual fast asleep,

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and she did not want them disturbed : she thought they looked so very pretty when asleep. And who should she find at the door but her own dear father !

“ Well, this *is* nice,” she said, and gave him a hug. “ Do come in at once and rest,” and she put her arms round him and brought him in, and spread the Spider’s best web for him to rest in.

“ And how is Mamma ? I wish she had come too, for the children are all so well, and she could have seen how they’ve grown. It is a long, long time since you saw them. When you are rested we will go and look at them.” For Mrs. Spider thought her children the most perfect in all the world, and expected everyone else to do so.

“ But, what must you think of me,” she said, “ chattering on like this when you must be longing for some refreshment ; I won’t be a minute,” and off she tripped.

She looked rather sad when she returned, for to tell the truth there was not very much left to bring out for her father. The Spider had never enquired what his wife and family were going to do for their mid-day meal. If he gave it a thought he probably decided it was wiser not to enquire, in case he might have to leave some of his nice sandwiches behind, which shows how abominably greedy he was, for you know he really had more than he needed.

“ I am afraid I have not very much to offer you father dear,” said poor little Mrs. Spider, when she

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returned "for you see Gizzo (that was the Spider's pet name) went off to work in a great hurry, and I stupidly put all the sandwiches for the family into his bag. He *will* be vexed when he discovers the mistake, but there, it cannot be helped, and so I have just made you a little omelet with some nuts and some flies' legs," and she hoped her father would not guess that the Spider had gone off without ever giving a thought to his wife and babies.

"How quick you've been my dear, indeed it is delicious, nothing could be nicer. What a lucky fellow Gizzo is to be sure. We miss you sadly at home. This is quite a treat," and the grandfather Spider ate up all the omelet, and then he said he would like to see the babies, for he had not much time to spare, and must be getting home again before the sun got too hot.

Just as he was going he said "Well, well, I *am* a nice one, I was going away without ever telling you why I came to see you to-day, and what would your mother have said to me then? I had a chance the other day of buying some ground-nuts very cheaply, so I am sending you on a few. I expect they will come this evening, and I hope you will find them good my dear. I thought I would let you know, for of course you must clear a place to store them in."

"Oh, father dear, how good of you," she cried, "Gizzo will be pleased and ——"

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“ Oh ! well remember they are for *you*,” said her father, for he had been hearing tales lately of the Spider’s doings which had not pleased him, and he began to be rather anxious about his daughter. “ Gizzo is well able to get them for himself, but you have all the babies to look after and I hope —— ”

“ Oh ! he looks after us all,” said Mrs. Spider, “ and he works so hard. Why now he has this farm I don’t suppose we shall see much of him, for he went ever so early this morning to work down there, and I don’t expect him back till late.”

“ There, there,” said her father, “ I am glad to hear it, I’m glad to hear it” (Have you ever noticed how Spiders repeat themselves, when they’re getting old ?) “ So good-bye my child, and get Gizzo to bring you all over some day soon, the sooner the better, ha ! ha ! the sooner the better.”

Mrs. Spider watched him a little way down the road, and he turned and waved to her several times, then she had to run in quickly, for one of the babies had got tied up in its own web, and was so frightened that it was making a fearful noise. The other babies were all roused, and of course joined in the chorus, and succeeded in tearing several holes in their webs.

“ Dear, dear,” said Mrs. Spider, “ a nice afternoon’s work I can see before me ; all the webs to darn, and

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nowhere to put the babies !” So first of all she cuddled them and comforted them all, and then she spun a big web, and put them all in it. She hung it up where she could see them while she went on with the mending of the torn ones, and while she was working she crooned away :

“ Sleep little Spiders
For Mother is here,
Sleep little Spiders,
You need have no fear.
Father and Mother are working away,
So rest Baby-Spiders, and sleep while you may.”

And soon they were all fast asleep again !

So we will leave them all awhile, and go and see what the Spider was doing.

He had slept on peacefully all the afternoon, and as evening drew on he woke up, for it was getting quite chilly. “ Heigh ho ! ” said he as he stretched himself, “ I am as tired as if I’d done a hard day’s work ”—which is often the case, isn’t it, with you and me ? I don’t mean to say we are ever intentionally lazy like the Spider, because if *you* were you would not be reading now, and if *I* were I should certainly not have found time to write this story for you. But it is not always the hardest work that is the most tiring !

Now where was I ? Oh, yes, I remember ! The lazy Spider was just awake.

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"It will never do to go home like this," he said to himself, "although I doubt even so if my wife would guess." He did not give her credit for any smartness, you see, perhaps he was mistaken, who knows? "But," he went on as he turned over and sat up, "I must devise something."

"Ha, ha! I have it," he exclaimed as he shook himself and got up on his hind legs—and what do you think he did then? Why, he scraped up some mud—there was plenty all round the pond—and plastered himself all over with it, you never saw such a sight as he made of himself. I don't think any of his friends would have cared to have walked home with him that evening. He carefully examined his reflection in the pond, and decided that he looked a very hard-working person, so he thought, as it was getting dusk he had better start off for home. When he came to the place where he had hidden his hoe, he took it out, and shouldering it again he went off at a run.

He was really a great strong Spider, well able to work, but when he got within sight of his home he commenced to stagger, and to drag first one foot and then the other, and hang his head as if he were quite worn out. His wife was watching for him (as he knew she would be) and she soon ran out to meet him and would have kissed him, but he cried out "Oh no, my dear, I must really have a wash first, I am so very muddy, but people cannot work hard, as I have been doing all day long, and not show any signs of it.

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It is different with you, of course you always look neat and nice, staying at home and having nothing much to do. I should not expect you to receive me in a like untidy state." Little he really cared whether she had much or little to do, he certainly never worried his head about it!

"Oh! my dear, my dear, you should not work so hard," cried little Mrs. Spider, "you really should not, there is no need. I must tell you all about it, but first let me carry your hoe."

The Spider pretended to be very unwilling for her to carry it. "It is nothing really," he said, "after you've carried it and used it as much as I have. It's all very well to say I shouldn't work so hard, but after all you want food for yourself and the children, and so I must struggle to do what I can!"

Poor Mrs. Spider was trying to keep up with him, for now she had the heavy hoe to carry and he had nothing he could easily out-strip her, and she had hardly any breath left. "I have some news," she panted.

"Oh! indeed," said the Spider. "Nothing very exciting, I imagine. One of the babies has grown another leg, I suppose? What queer things women are."

"The Babies are quite alright," said Mrs. Spider, rather sharply for her. She did not much like being always teased, and sometimes when she was tired it got on

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her nerves, and then, poor little thing, she used to cry. However, to-day, she was too excited to notice it very much.

“My father came after you had gone,” she said, “and he has made us a present of some ground-nuts. Oh ! Gizzo, such a lovely lot. You need not go to the farm for a long time, and we can enjoy them and have a little holiday together.”

“Not so fast, my dear,” said the Spider, “we shall want some corn again, some day, and it won’t grow itself ; but we shall see. And now get me some water that I may wash and get ready while you prepare the supper.”

After supper, the Spider said he thought after all that if his wife would make him some more sandwiches he had better have another long day at the farm. “There is a great deal to be done before one can start sowing,” he said, “I don’t suppose it ever occurred to you, but so it is, and I shall be some time getting the farm in order. If I don’t go to-morrow it will probably mean that to-day’s work will be wasted : one must keep it up, and so I think I will go. After all, this is the best time of the year, and when the corn is ripe and ready to cut and store away, you will be glad you let me go.”

So away he went next morning and did exactly as he had done the day before. He slept the whole day, and

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then when night came, returned home, pretending that he had been so very hard at work all day.

After a week, it struck him that it was rather a pity to carry the hoe backwards and forwards for nothing, so he told his wife that he should not need it again for some little time and would leave it at home. This went on until nearly all the ground-nuts were eaten, and every day as the babies got bigger they wanted more to eat.

One day when Mrs. Spider had been spending the day with her father and mother, she noticed that the corn on the farms she passed on her way was nearly ripe. So that evening when they were sitting in the porch—all Spiders' houses have a porch—she ventured to remark to her husband that it would very soon be time to cut the corn. Whereupon the Spider fell into a great rage and said he would not put up with interference, that if women would only mind their own affairs, and not meddle with what was no concern of their's, the world would be a far happier place. Of course he was afraid that when Mrs. Spider found him out, as she would be sure to do, she would be very angry and tell her parents, so he pretended to get up and go off in a huff, thinking that when he came back she would say she was sorry, and that she had never meant to interfere.

But Mrs. Spider was not always so silly as she looked, and besides there were the babies to be thought of. So

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next morning she said, "I think I will go with you to-day and help cut the corn, it must be quite time, and it is too much for one person to attempt."

"That is so kind, and just what I have been expecting of you," said the wicked old Spider, "but, my dear, think of the babies, what would become of them if you were not here to keep watch all day long?"

"Oh! I've arranged all that," said Mrs. Spider. She had not really done so, but from living so long with such a deceitful person as the Spider, I am sorry to say, she was beginning to be almost as bad herself. It was sad, and grieved her friends very much; still no one liked to tell her of it.

"I asked Mrs. Fly one day, and she said she would be only too pleased to come in. She has admired our best web for a long, long time, and," drawing herself up, "it is a very fine one. I thought if we were very tired on our return," she continued, "we could cook the old thing for supper: it would save a lot of trouble, and I don't suppose we shall either of us be very much inclined to go and shop at that time of night."

Now this was really horrible of Mrs. Spider, wasn't it? But Spiders haven't any consciences, poor things: they don't even know what such a thing is, and in any case have no place to keep it in.

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“That’s a very fine plan, my dear, and does you infinite credit,” said the Spider, “infinite credit, but I am afraid it is out of the question. I really could not allow our children to be left all day with that stupid Mrs. Fly. Why, whatever would people say ? It is not to be thought of, but I would certainly ask Mrs. Fly to come in to see the web, by all means. If you keep her late talking, who knows, we may still have a good supper. He ! he !” And he laughed in a hideously cold-blooded way. “You must concoct a better plan than that. Meantime, I’m off to my work, and I will try—mind, I do not promise, I only say I will try—to carry home some of the corn to show you to-night. If I cannot—and you must remember I am always very tired after my day’s work—well to-morrow you shall go yourself, and I will stay behind to look after the babies.”

Now the Spider had made up his mind to steal some grain, so he went about and looked at all the farms to try and decide which was the finest corn, and which looked the easiest to steal.

Presently he came to some very rich land. It belonged to some strange creature such as you and I have never seen. He was a Half-Man, and had only one arm, one leg, half a head, and half a body.

He was very rich, and did not do any work himself. Of course when you come to think about it, you will see that it was really very difficult for him to walk about at all,

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he could only hop in fact, and it was quite impossible for him to work. So it was a lucky thing that he was rich and could afford to pay other people to do so for him. Poor Half-Man ! we must always be very sorry for any people who have not got all their legs and arms. But the Half-Man's servants, who were very well paid, got lazy and did not look after the land properly. It was a great shame to take advantage of him—but that is the way of the world. So when the Spider looked about, and saw the beautiful ripe corn, and no one guarding it, he seized the opportunity to help himself very liberally.

Of course his wife was very much pleased when he came home with the corn, and she suggested that they should keep Mrs. Fly, and eat her some other day when they ran short of food again. But no, the Spider felt so sure of being able to take as much as he wanted from the Half-Man's farm, that he said " We'll have a feast to-night, my dear, for there is plenty of corn where that came from, as fine and as good, too. Perhaps it will teach you to be more patient in future, and not so hasty in your judgment ; I was really very hurt at what you said last night. But there, there," as Mrs. Spider looked ready to cry, " don't cry my dear woman, for pity's sake, I am tired and want my supper." So they had supper and went off to bed.

In the morning the Spider teased his wife and said "I

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suppose you wouldn't like to go this morning, instead of me ? The corn is rather heavy you know, and it is too valuable to spill."

"Oh dear, oh dear," replied his wife, "do be kind and forgive me," for he had made her feel so thoroughly in the wrong that she was ready to do anything. "I am sure I never meant to interfere and I never will." So she kissed her husband 'good-bye' and away he went.

Meantime the Half-Man had been out to look at his corn, and he soon saw that a thief had been at work. Of course he had no idea who it was, and so he thought the best plan was not to say a word to anyone, but just to set a trap ; and this he did. I think he had rather more than half-brains in his half-head, don't you ?

He got some tar and made a big doll with it, and dressed it and set it up in the field, and then he hid behind some trees to watch what would happen.

Presently the Spider arrived, and just as he was beginning to fill his pockets with corn, he looked up and saw the doll. It was so pretty he was quite taken in, and besides the sun was in his eyes, which always makes it difficult to see. He thought it was a beautiful girl, and he was always very courteous to ladies, although he treated his own wife so badly, so he took off his hat, and holding out his hand to her, he bowed and said "Good morning, sweet maiden, don't be shy," and as she did not move nor

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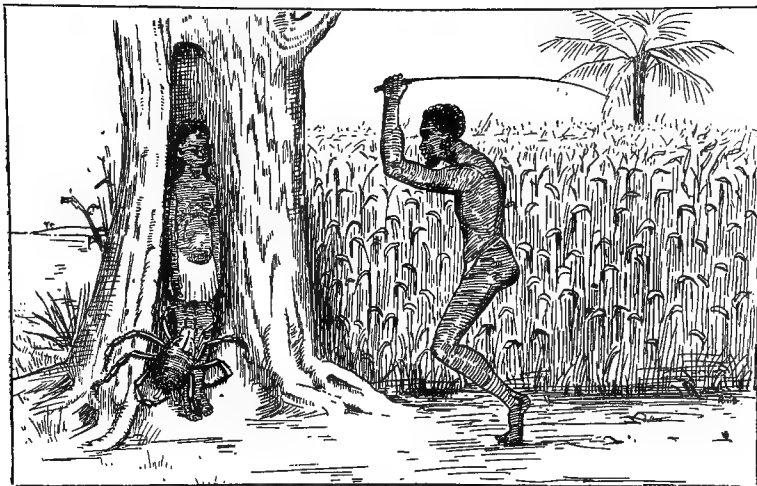
take any notice, "Come, shake hands," and he caught one of her hands in his. Then he wanted to draw his hand back again, but found that it was held fast. He pulled and pulled, and shook and shook, but to no purpose ; of course the tar held him tightly. Then he got very angry, for he thought the girl was trying to catch him, and hold him till someone came to help her.

"If you don't let me go," he said, putting a hand on her other bare arm, "I will kick you." Still she never uttered a word, and now both his hands were stuck fast !

"You horrible creature," he cried, "you nasty wicked girl," and fell into a great rage and kicked her, and of course his leg stuck fast and he was helpless. He was bent, and doubled up, and speechless with rage by this time, and as he let his head fall against her, that stuck as well. He *was* in a plight !

Now the Half-Man had been watching all the time, and when he saw that the Spider was really safely caught, he took his whip and hopped to the spot and beat him. He beat him, and beat him, and beat him, till he was quite breathless, and the Spider's back was all raw, and his skin peeling off. Then he loosed him from the tar trap, and said, "Be off, be off, I can only half kill you this time, as I'm only a Half-Man, but if I ever catch you here again, I will half kill you again, and that will be the end of you."

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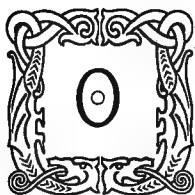


“THE HALF-MAN BEAT THE SPIDER.”

The Spider crawled away into the forest and lay like a dead person for days and days. At last when he managed to get home, he told his wife he had been set upon and beaten by some robbers who had stolen all his corn, and had threatened to kill him if he ever dared to show his face there again. Of course she was very sorry for him and believed all he said, and they decided to move right away and live nearer her relatives in the future, and it was not until a long time afterwards that she found out the truth. But that I must tell you some other time.

IX.

THE BILLY-GOAT WHO SAID HE WAS A
MAGICIAN.



ONCE upon a time there was a Billy-Goat who was certainly rather smart, but he was always boasting of his cleverness, and making himself very objectionable to the other inhabitants of the forest, so he had but few friends ; for animals as well as people, soon become tired of that sort of thing.

The Hyaena, being the scape-goat of all the beasts, disliked the Billy-Goat most of all, and I am going to tell you why ! But first you must know of the trick that he played her, and perhaps another day I shall tell you of how she thought to avenge herself, and you will see that there is no hope of their ever being friends again.

Very early one dewy morning, the Billy-Goat set out to go to the market, and his shaggy coat soon became very wet, for it soaked up the moisture. So to dry his coat he capered and frisked about (for he felt very young although quite six years of age) and as he thought no one

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would see him so early in the morning, he did not trouble to look where he was going. As he danced he sang :—

“ A great Magician am I,
Although the weather's so dry ;
I could bring down the rain,
Dry it all up again,
If only I were to try.”

Suddenly—Bang !—Crash !—Smash !—Bump !—he ran into the Hyaena !

“ Why don't you look where you are going ? ” she snarled, very much annoyed. “ One of these days you'll get into trouble going along in that silly way, with your head as high in the air as if you were some great personage.”

“ So I am,” said the Billy-Goat, “ and I'll ask you to remember it for the future.”

“ Rubbish,” snapped the Hyaena. “ You're very absurd, Mr. Goat, very absurd indeed, and amuse me greatly. I should really like to know why you give yourself such airs.”

“ If you must know,” replied the Billy-Goat, “ I am a Magician.”

“ What ! ” shrieked the Hyaena, “ Oh dear, Oh dear, that is the best joke I have heard for many a long day. An absurd person like you, a Magician ! Well, I never. I have a great mind to test you, Mr. Billy-Goat.”

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“Pray try,” replied the Billy-Goat affably, “I am sure it is always a pleasure to serve you, Mrs. Hyaena.”

“A great Magician am I,
Although the weather’s so dry;
I could bring down the rain;
Dry it all up again,
If only I were to try.”

The Hyaena could not control herself any longer but burst out laughing. “You idiotic old animal,” said she, “your mind has given way.” And then becoming angry, she continued, “But I have had enough of your boastful, silly chatter : since you say you can bring down the rain, do so : if you do not I will kill you, and drink your blood ! It is a long time since breakfast, and I should very much like a drink.”

Now the Billy-Goat, although not quite as clever as he thought himself to be, was still very smart, and even if not a real Magician he was a good imitation one, so he bowed gravely and said in his sweet musical voice, “I wish you had asked me something more worthy of my powers, Mrs. Hyaena, but since you asked me for rain, why here you are,” and he shook himself so violently that the dew flew off in every direction and spattered Mrs. Hyaena’s face, so that she thought it was real rain.

“Indeed you are a wonderful man,” cried the astonished Hyaena, who, as you know, was a very silly

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animal. "I will never call you stupid any more," and she was so frightened, that she thought the Billy-Goat must be a real Magician, so off she ran as hard as she could.

But when she had got home and had told her mother of it, the mother said, "I do not believe in Mr. Billy-Goat, although he does very strange things. Go back to him and ask him for more rain, then if he can again make it come, he must indeed be a Magician."

So off went the Hyaena again, and met Mr. Billy-Goat who was now coming back from the market where he had been buying sweet cakes.

"Good morning again, O great Magician," said the Hyaena, rather nervously, for she did not want to offend him if really a powerful being. "I have been thinking of the wonderful thing you did a couple of hours ago, and would so much like to see it again. It is wonderful indeed to me, but I suppose you think nothing of it, being a Magician."

Now the Billy-Goat saw that the Hyaena was trying to catch him, and as the sun had been up some time his coat was nearly dry, so he was rather afraid that the trick might not come off a second time.

"Come up close then," said he, "and open your eyes very wide." Immediately he shook himself violently as before, and sprinkled a few drops into the Hyaena's eyes.

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Then, when she could no longer see, he uncorked a flask which he was carrying and emptied it over her back.

"That's enough, that's enough, dear Mr. Billy-Goat," shrieked the Hyaena, terrified, "I shall be drowned with all this water, oh ! do dry it up again."

"Very well," said he, and when she had opened her eyes again, "you see all the ground is dry once more. Had I liked I could have drowned you."

"Oh dear, Mr. Billy-Goat. Oh Great Magician," whimpered the silly beast, "I will never doubt you any more." And once more she scampered off home.

Now the Billy-Goat was very cunning, he knew that the Hyaena could never take a warning, and that as she was stronger than he, she would some day kill him unless he taught her a lesson, and he wondered what he could do. But he could not help laughing to think of how he had frightened her for the present.

Just then he met the Lion. "Good morning, Mr. Billy-Goat, you look very happy to-day, have you had some slice of luck ?"

"Indeed I have, Sire," replied the Billy-Goat, "I have found a new confection that suits my taste excellently (the Billy-Goat loved long words when speaking to a superior), and I was wondering if Your Majesty would like to know of it."

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“Indeed I would,” said the Lion, “have you it with you ?”

“Yes, Sire,” replied the Billy-Goat, handing him a cake, “this is made of Hyaena’s tears, I bought it just now in the market ; it is a little stale if anything, the tears are much better when they are fresh, but the Hyaena is so mean that she charges an awful price for them, and says she will make no more at all for anyone, not even for you.”

“Oh, indeed, the Hyaena said that, did she ?” asked the Lion, munching the cake, “well I shall see whether I can *persuade* her to give me some, they are very good,” and off he went, leaving the Billy-Goat roaring with laughter at his wit so the Lion thought, but really because the cakes were not made with Hyaena tears at all, but with honey and flour, the Billy-Goat having made up the story so as to get the Hyaena into trouble.

As soon as the Lion saw the Hyaena he said, “Ha ! Mrs. Hyaena, just the very person I wanted to see.”

“I am honoured indeed Your Majesty,” replied she, “how can a poor Hyaena serve you ?”

“I have just tasted some Hyaena tear-cakes” said the Lion, “and find them very agreeable. I desire some to be sent to the Palace daily, in future.”

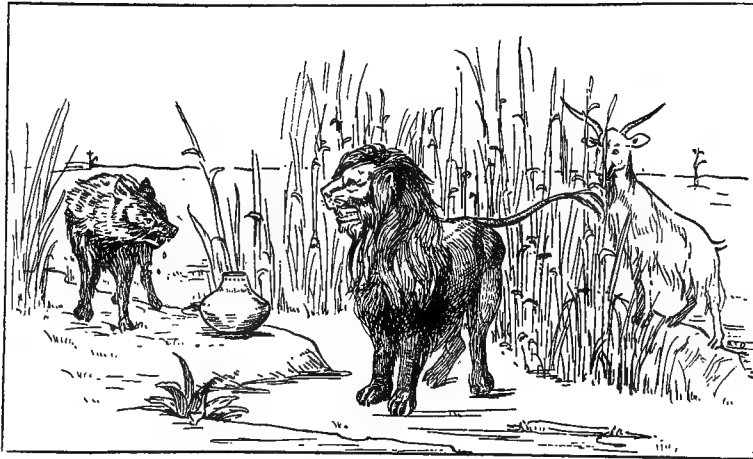
“Some what ?” asked the Hyaena. “I have never heard of such things.”

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"No lies," roared the Lion, getting very angry, "make me some at once. You can make them readily enough to sell, for the Billy-Goat bought some only to-day."

"Indeed, indeed," faltered the Hyaena now thoroughly alarmed, "I do not know what you mean." And she began to cry.

When the Lion saw the tears he said, "Ah! so you have tears after all, have you? I knew you were lying," and he went up and tasted them.



THE HYAENA BEGAN TO CRY.

When he found that they were very bitter instead of being sweet he was fearfully angry. "How dare you!"

THE BILLY-GOAT WHO SAID HE WAS A MAGICIAN.

he roared. "Do you dare to make fun of me? Me, the King of the Forest? Unless you make me some sweet ones at once I shall kill you."

"Oh! what shall I do, what shall I do?" wailed the wretched animal, shedding more tears, "I have none but these."

The Lion having found that these also were bitter, was furious, and beat her and thumped her, and kicked her, until he was tired. Then seeing that a lot of her tears had fallen into a calabash, he thought that perhaps these were a special kind, so he went to try them.

Now the opening in the calabash was rather small, and while the Lion was trying to get at the tears, the Hyaena fled, and the Lion was so long in finding out that she had gone, that it was too late to chase her, so he went off home in a very angry frame of mind.

When the Hyaena got home she told her family, and they were very much alarmed, for they thought that the Lion might treat everyone of them in the same way. But seeing that the Billy-Goat was at the bottom of it, they made up their minds to pay him back, so they all went off to his home.

Now he had been so much pleased with himself at the result of the trick, that he had wasted a lot of time on the homeward journey, through telling the joke to all whom he met on the road, and he only reached his house just as the

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

Hyaenas arrived. He knew he had no time to lock up his doors and windows, and he guessed their errand at once, but once more trusted to his wits to get him out of the scrape.

“Good evening, friends,” said he, smiling and wagging his head, “you have come at a lucky moment : I am just off to the market to get some meat ; the Chief Butcher owes me a lot of money which he cannot pay, and as he has killed a Bullock only this afternoon, I and some friends are going to seize all his meat. But it is far too much for us, so I invite you one and all to the feast.”

Now when the Hyaenas found the Billy-Goat so friendly, they thought that perhaps they might have been mistaken in imagining him to be the cause of all the trouble, and besides, they were rather afraid that he had magical powers, so they thought they would pretend to be friendly too, especially as there was a feast in view. Hyaenas are as greedy as Spiders, and you know how greedy they are !

But one old Uncle-Hyaena, rather more suspicious than the rest, said “Very well, but if you break your word we shall eat you instead,” and all the others shrieked “Yes, yes, we will eat him instead.”

“Oh ! certainly,” said the Billy-Goat, “but I should be a very poor meal for you all : your uncle would take the lot, and you others would get nothing at all, whereas a Bullock will more than satisfy every one of us.”

THE BILLY-GOAT WHO SAID HE WAS A MAGICIAN.

"That is true, that is true," shouted the young Hyaenas, knowing their uncle's little failings, and fearing to lose their feast, "let us be off to the market at once."

Now on their way, they came upon a big wild-beast trap, and a leg of a Bullock was hanging above it to tempt the unwary. The old Billy-Goat had led them there on purpose. He knew very well what it was, for his mother had warned him of it, Mr. Billy-Goat, Senior, having lost his life in it some years before under very sad circumstances.

"Ah, now you see," said he, turning to the Uncle-Hyaena, "was I right or not?"

"Yes, I see a leg," growled he, "but where is the rest, one leg is not much good." He was afraid that he would not get much for himself when there were so many to divide the booty.

"The Chief Butcher has it in his house of course," replied the Billy-Goat, "you don't suppose he is going to leave it all outside? This is only to tempt you to buy."

Then going to the mouth of the trap he called out "Chief Butcher, Chief Butcher, pay me your debt."

But there was no reply.

Again he called "Chief Butcher, if you do not pay me your debt at once, we shall eat up all your meat." And all the Hyaenas chimed in "Yes we shall eat up every bit," and their tongues hung out at the idea.

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Now the old Uncle-Hyaena thought that perhaps after all there might be no more meat, and he determined that he was going to have a feast even if no one else did, so while the Billy-Goat had been calling out he had edged up nearer and nearer to the Bullock's leg hanging over the trap.

"I will go to the Butcher's house," said the Billy-Goat, "but you stay here and see that nobody gets that meat while I am away," and off he went.

They waited, but there was no Billy-Goat, and they shouted, but there was no reply, and at last they guessed that the Billy-Goat had run away.

"Chase him, chase him," they cried, "he has made fun of us."

But the old Uncle-Hyaena could stand it no longer, he had been gloating over the meat ever since he first saw it.

"You can do what you like" he said, springing on to the Bullock's leg, and immediately the trap caught him.

"Oh, Mr. Chief Butcher," he yelled (for he thought it was he who held him) "let me go please, I did not mean to steal your meat, I was going to save it for you, the wicked old Billy-Goat was going to take it."

But there was no reply.

"Oh, Mr. Chief Butcher," he wailed, "have pity and I will pay your debt for you."

But still there was no reply.

THE BILLY-GOAT WHO SAID HE WAS A MAGICIAN.

When the other Hyaenas saw their Uncle caught thus they were terrified, and ran off home uttering hideous yells, and crying out "The Billy-Goat has killed Uncle, the Billy-Goat has killed Uncle."

When the Billy-Goat, who was hiding close by in the bushes, saw what had happened he came out of his hiding place, and remarked "What an extraordinary way to behave, I really cannot understand any of the Hyaenas, they are so badly brought up," and tossing his head he went off home without even a glance at the poor Uncle-Hyaena in the trap.

By and bye, the men who had set the trap came, and when they saw the Uncle-Hyaena they were very angry. They had set it for the Lion or the Leopard so as to get his skin, but the Hyaena's skin is quite useless, so they beat him and kicked him, and would have killed him had he not managed to slip out of their hands and escape.

He reached home in a very sorry plight, and when he told the others what had happened to him they said, "This is the end of our acquaintance with the Billy-Goat: he is not respectable, he is a fraud, and we honest Hyaenas cannot know such a person; he is always playing tricks." They were of course afraid of him, but they were not going to admit that.

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As for the Billy-Goat, after he had locked up his doors and windows he could be heard singing :

“ A mighty Magician am I,
The cowards to kill me did try ;
Ah, had they but known
They'd have left me alone.”

I think that you all can guess why.

WHY HAWA PREVENTED THE BEASTS FROM DRINKING.

X.

WHY HAWA PREVENTED THE BEASTS FROM DRINKING.



OW I am going to tell you a story about a girl who was very fond of her little sister. She was named Hawa, while the little one was called Zainabu. The whole family worked on a farm.

When the father and mother started out in the morning with Hawa, they used to hide little Zainabu in a pot of grease ! It was not a very nice place, but Zainabu was a dear little girl and never complained. Perhaps this is why Hawa was so fond of her ? I wonder ! Of course they had to put the pot of grease away in a safe place, too, in case anything should upset it, and it should be spilt.

All went well for some time, and every evening Zainabu was delighted when her sister came home, and she could come out of her hiding place. What games they had together ! You would think she would have been quite tired of hiding, but no ! "hide and seek" was one of their favourite games.

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Her father and mother were looking forward to the time when Zainabu would be big enough to go to the farm with them. There was no school time for these little girls, as soon as ever they were strong and big enough, they had to do their share of hard work.

But alas ! one day they forgot to wake as early as they usually did, and were rather late at starting, and so Hawa, like the dear little helpful soul she was, offered to hide her little sister. But when she had hidden her, she was unable to lift the pot into its accustomed place, and in their hurry to be off, the parents forgot that part of the arrangement for Zainabu's safety.

As ill-luck would have it, no sooner had they all gone, than wicked Mrs. Hyaena chanced to come sniffing round the house, to see what she could pick up. Now Hyaenas, as everybody knows, are very fond of all kinds of grease, and what do you think ? Why this horrible old Hyaena just swallowed the pot of grease at a mouthful, with poor little Zainabu in it ! Then she scurried away back to her den as fast as ever her legs could take her.

You can fancy what a terrible state the poor father and mother were in when they reached home that night. The pot of grease had disappeared as if it had never been there—it left no traces behind. “Where is our darling Zainabu ? Whatever could have become of her ?” they asked each other. But their sorrow was as nothing com-

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pared with Hawa's, for she blamed herself so bitterly for not having tried to lift the pot up into a safer place. "I shall never be happy again," she wailed. "Oh ! my sister, my sister."

Now Hawa was a clever little girl, and while she was walking up and down and round the house, she saw the marks of foot-prints, and she wondered whose they could be. Of course *we* know it was wicked Mrs. Hyaena who had been prowling round, but Hawa did not know this, and so she had to examine the marks very carefully. Even then she could not decide, but she thought out a plan, and now you will see what a very clever, persevering little girl she was.

On their way to the farm there was a stream called "Let-me-run," and Hawa had noticed how all the beasts of the forest came there to drink every evening when their day's hunting was over. So she got a big calabash (or bowl) and scooped up all the water into it ! There was nothing but mud left. Then she climbed up into the Baobab tree and waited till evening came. In the evening all the beasts came, as was their custom. When Hawa looked, she saw the first was a Lion ! But she was not a bit frightened, and began singing softly :—

"Oh ! Mr. Lion, where have you been ?
Have you my dear little sister seen ?"

FABLES AND FAIRY TALES.

And the Lion answered "I am going to 'Let-me-Run,' for my evening drink."

So Hawa said, "You cannot, for I have taken up all the water. If you will give me back my sister, I will give you some water to drink," and then she went on singing :—

"If you my sister will restore to me

I'll give you water which I have, you see."

Then the Lion coughed, "Hakk, hakk," and said, "You can see *I* have only eaten grass."

Now the Baobab is a magical tree, and when Hawa heard the lion's reply, she said, "Good Mrs. Tree grow up higher," and it was as well, for the Lion began roaring and growling. However, he soon calmed down for he did not want to keep all the other beasts away. So the tree had grown a little taller, and taken Hawa up with it. Presently the Hedgehog came and Hawa sang again :—

"O Mr. Hedgehog where have you been ?

Have you my dear little sister seen ?"

And the Hedgehog said he had not seen Zainabu, and that he wanted a drink, but he could not find the stream 'Let-me-Run.' So Hawa sang on :—

"If you my sister will restore to me,

I'll give you water, which I have, you see."

But of course the Hedgehog did not know any more about it than the Lion,

So Hawa said "Good Mrs. Tree, grow up higher."

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Now when the Giraffe came, Hawa was glad she had gone up a good way, for you know that the Giraffe is so tall he can easily eat even the higher branches of some trees, and so it was as well to be out of reach, or she herself might have shared little Zainabu's fate and been swallowed with a bunch of leaves !

All the animals came, and one by one Hawa asked them the same question, and they all coughed "Hakk, Hakk," in turn, and assured her that they had only eaten grass.

But Hawa had no pity. She was determined to find her sister, and now the thought of seeing her again, filled her with such joy that she forgot to be very miserable, for she began to feel sure Zainabu was alive, and would soon be with her again. So she said each time, "Good Mrs. Tree grow up a little higher"—and the kind tree grew up.

Now we know that only the wicked old Hyaena was guilty, so all the other poor animals had to suffer until she came. Soon the forest resounded with their groans. They were nearly dead with thirst. The day had been a hot, trying one, and their poor throats were parched and dry.

Still Hawa thought only of her sister. Perhaps little Zainabu, too, was suffering agonies of thirst and hunger. Perhaps she was as miserable at being parted from her parents, as they were at losing their dear little girl. And

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she hardened her heart and would not come down. She was very, very high up by this time, for she had asked all the animals, and as we know, they could none of them give up her sister, and so she had risen higher and higher with the tree.

At last the Hyaena came. She was late, for after swallowing the pot of grease, she had had a nap, and it was long past her usual time. Sang Hawa again :

“Mrs. Hyaena, where have you been?
Have you my dear little sister seen?”

“Not I!” said the wicked beast. “I don’t know and I don’t care as long as I get my evening drink.” (Can you imagine anyone as wicked as the Hyaena?) Then Hawa guessed that it was the Hyaena, and so she sang on quite calmly—

“Mrs. Hyaena, what do you think,”
The Animals all are waiting to drink.”

The Hyaena growled back, “Well, *I’m* not going to wait,” but she found the stream quite dry.

How frightened she must have been, knowing how wicked she was. Hawa’s song came softly down—she was up so high now, her voice sounded quite faint and dim—

“Oh! sister Zainabu, never you fear,
I’ll not give them drink till you appear.”

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This was too much for the Hyaena, and in her excitement she coughed, "Hakk, hakk," and up came the pot of grease with little Zainabu in it !

"Oh dear, Mrs. Tree, put me down, put me down," cried Hawa, and the Tree who loved all good children, put her down so quickly that she upset the calabash, and the stream was quite full again, and all the poor animals were able to drink.

However, they could not forgive the wicked Hyaena, and they beat her and drove her off into the forest, where she perished of thirst. And I think you will agree with me that she was well punished.

And to return to Hawa and Zainabu, their joy was too great for me to describe, you must try and imagine it. But I must tell you that like good little girls, they ran home as quickly as ever they could. Hawa had not told anyone of her plan, and the poor parents were nearly frantic with grief when evening came, and neither of their children was to be found. They thought of course that the same fate had befallen Hawa that had robbed them of Zainabu. So their joy knew no bounds. I don't think they ever left Zainabu alone in the house any more.

XI.

THE BOY WHO REFUSED TO WALK.



ANY years ago there was a woman who lived in the forest with her husband. He was a forester, and used to be out all day and only come home at night. She was such a good wife and made him so comfortable, that he nearly always went to sleep in his big arm-chair.

Now it was very dull for her of course, because although there were many foresters, their huts were some distance away, and all the others had families of their own to look after. The wives had no time to go visiting. She alone had no children, and it was very, very lonely. So she used to wish very much for a little baby of her own. And she prayed and prayed that God would think of her and send her one. She was a very good wife and she worked hard, but foresters' huts are small, and there was not enough to employ all her time. And no one can be happy without plenty to do. They were a long way from any village, and her husband was too busy to take her, and she was afraid to go alone.

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One day she was sitting outside the hut, and the sun was so warm : it was all so peaceful and still that she fell fast asleep. While she slept she dreamt that the good God had said He would send her a son. She woke up overjoyed, and was all impatience for her husband's return, for she knew that he would be just as pleased as she was. He had often said how nice it would be to have a son of their own to bring up as a forester, to take his place and look after them when they were old.

Their joy knew no bounds when the baby arrived.

He was a sweet little fellow, and no baby ever had a warmer welcome than this curly-headed little chap. His father and mother made a tremendous fuss of him. He was always so merry and happy, and he simply loved to lie all day basking in the sun.

This went on for some long time, and he was getting so fat and heavy that the forester said to his wife one night "Surely it is time the boy walked now. You must let me teach him to do so."

But his mother was very indignant, and said "Men know nothing about babies. You go on chopping down your trees, and leave me to manage him. He'll walk fast enough when the time comes."

Every time his father said anything, it was always the same. She made excuses and gave him a hundred good

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reasons why the boy should only crawl, that one day the forester lost his temper and said :

“ Oh, well, just as you please ; you have to carry him, after all, so I don't mind. Still, if anything should happen to me and you have to leave the hut, you will wish you had a proper son, instead of a crab.” And since he really loved his son very much and did not want to see him spoilt, he tried to shame him into walking.

“ Come Little Crab,” he would say, “ It's time you were a man now. Come, try and stand by me.”

But no, nothing made any difference, and the pet name given him in fun clung to him always, and he was known all over the forest as “ Little Crab.”

Now one day, when the forester was chopping down a very big tree, it fell rather suddenly and he was badly crushed. His poor wife came running when she heard the sad news. She was heart-broken and sobbed most bitterly.

“ Good-bye,” he said to her “ if only ‘ Little Crab ’ would wake up and be a man, I should not fret so much ta leaving you. But you must really begin to think of yourself more now, and I want you to promise me that when I am gone you will try to make him walk. It is really too bad for you to have to carry him everywhere now.”

So she promised, for she was devoted to her husband and would have promised him anything. After he was

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buried, she tried her hardest to persuade "Little Crab" to walk. She told him that it had been his father's last wish that he should take care of her, "And you know we must try to do whatever we know he would have wished," she finished.

But not a bit of it, "Little Crab" only smiled, and springing on her back, as he was always accustomed to do, he said with a smile, "I'm so tired mother dear, carry me up to bed," and as he absolutely refused to get down, she had to carry him up.

When he was safely tucked up in bed, she sat down and pondered as to the best means of carrying out her husband's wishes. Moreover, she saw now how foolish she had been to spoil him so.

"I must make a last appeal to him in the morning," she thought. "He is really very good-hearted. But whatever shall I do if I fail?" (You will see later on that Little Crab could not help being obstinate. He did not really mean to be unkind).

Suddenly the poor woman remembered a great Magician who had many retainers, and lived quite close in the heart of that same great forest. He was a very clever man, and she had once been able to help him out of a difficulty. He had promised then to help her, if ever she needed his aid. She never had before, so now she thought, "I will go straight to him in the morning."

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“THE MAGICIAN HAD MANY RETAINERS.”

When it was light she got up, made a fire, and cooked the breakfast. Oh! how sad she was without her dear husband. But Little Crab had no consideration: he never thought of his mother's loneliness. He had been spoilt, and thought of no one but himself.

“Little Mother,” he called, “is breakfast ready?”

“Quite, my son,” she answered, as cheerfully as she could. “And I am coming to help you to walk down,” but he would not stir a step.

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“Then I must leave you to get down as best you can,” she said, turning to go, but Little Crab was too quick for her, and sprang upon her back as quick as thought. So she gave in once more, and carried him down.

“I cannot go on like this,” she said. “To-day we will go and visit a Magician, and see what he can do for us.” And Little Crab was quite willing, which shows he was ready to walk, had he known how and felt able !

As soon as they had finished breakfast, and she had cleared it all away, for she was a very tidy woman, and could never bear to leave her hut unless it was quite in order and everything in its place, she set out. Little Crab was on her back as usual. It seemed a very long way to the Magician’s house, for Little Crab was no light weight : he was nearly a man by this time, and her heart was heavy too. Of course she had to take a present with her, for Magicians do not cure people for nothing, any more than other quack doctors will nowadays !

When they reached the entrance to his cave, they heard a voice saying, “O, Wife of the Forester, what do you want with me ?” He really knew quite well, but this is a way Magicians have. The cleverer they are, the more stupid they try to look, and I can’t think why ! They certainly would not like anyone to think them so !

“O, Great Magician !” said she, “I fear you do not remember me ? You once promised to help me, and I

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have never claimed your promise, but oh, I do so want you to tell me what to do for my son. He refuses to walk, and now he has become so heavy, that I cannot go on carrying him. Besides, now his father is dead, I have so much more to do," and she began to cry.

"There, there, my dear woman, don't cry," said the Magician, for he hated tears and had not much sympathy. I suppose he was too clever really. "Tears never helped anyone yet, as far as I know. Anyway I have no use for them. Put the boy down and come nearer."

So Little Crab was left outside while his mother went into the cave.

"You must buy a goat, and drag it as far as ever you can into the forest, away from your home, then kill it. When you have done so, say 'Little Crab, get down while I light a fire, that I may cook the goat's flesh. So shall we eat and be comforted.' When he is safely down, take to your heels and run home as fast as ever you can. He will follow, never fear."

So she thanked him very much, and went off at once to follow his instructions.

Directly Little Crab got down, she ran away home as quickly as ever she could, just as the Wise Man had said she must.

Now Little Crab was too much astonished to do anything at first. He simply sat down and gazed after his

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mother's vanishing figure. When she had quite disappeared, he looked from tree to tree as if expecting her to spring out suddenly, as she had done to amuse him, when he was a baby. He was still sitting quite contentedly where she had left him, and never dreamt of making any effort to follow her, when a voice said,

"Good morning, Little Crab." It was a Hyaena. Of course all the beasts knew his name.

"Good morning," she said again, as he still sat gazing stupidly in front of him. "Have you some nice meat for me?" For she had smelt the goat's blood a long way off and tracked it to the spot.

Little Crab said, "Well I have got some, but it is only for the person who will carry me on his back. Can you do that, Mrs. Hyaena?"

"Jump up, jump up," cried the greedy Hyaena, and she began gobbling up the meat at once!

When she had finished it, there was nothing to be seen. She had eaten every bit.

"Get down boy," she said roughly, "I want to go to get some water to drink."

"Softly, softly, Mrs. Hyaena," said Little Crab "you must give me back my meat."

"Nonsense," retorted the Hyaena, "you know I cannot. Get down!" still more rudely this time.

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“Oh, no, if you cannot give me the meat, you must carry me on your back for ever.”

Then the Hyaena tried to bite him, but he moved his position so quickly, that she could not reach him, and so she had to go about with him on her back.

They went about like this for some days, and Little Crab would not get down for a single moment, for he was so afraid that if he did, the Hyaena would not let him get up again.

At last, however, the Hyaena got tired of this, so she in turn bethought her of the Magician.

Now the Magician gave her the same advice as he had given Little Crab's mother.

So she went and bought a goat, and when she had dragged it far into the forest she killed it.

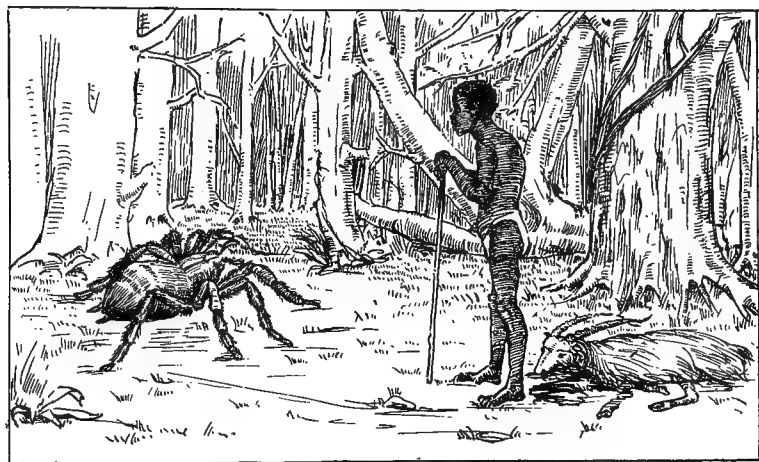
“Little Crab, Little Crab,” she said, “get down and when I have cooked the Goat, we will feast together, for I'm sure you must be hungry.”

Little Crab thought from the Hyaena's honeyed tones, that he was really going to get a meal, so he got down off her back, and immediately, the Hyaena ran up a tree. But she was so hungry herself that she could not bear to leave all the fresh raw meat of which she was so fond, so she made a hook of one of the branches and hauled up a huge piece of the Goat.

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Now Little Crab was crying so bitterly that he did not notice her, and so presently she thought it would be quite safe to creep down and seize the remainder.

But Little Crab saw her, and rushed to get on her back again, and the Hyaena was only just in time to run away.



“THE SPIDER CAME OUT FOR A WALK.”

Just then the Spider came out for a walk, and saw the Boy and the remainder of what had been the Goat, so he said “Good morning Little Crab, why are you so sad when there is plenty of meat to be had ?” For you see the Spider was so greedy, that he could not imagine anyone being sad as long as he had enough to eat—silly old thing !

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“Cheer up ! let us eat,” he went on.

“Oh ! no,” returned Little Crab, “you may not eat unless you will take me up on your back and carry me.”

Now the Spider was very crafty and had no intention of carrying the Boy very far, but he was quite determined to have the meat, so he answered in the sweetest voice.

“Why, with pleasure, Little Crab, you are no weight, jump up, jump up.”

However when he had eaten all the meat, he said rather roughly,

“Get down, Boy,” just as the Hyæna had done !

But Little Crab said, “Oh, no, a bargain’s a bargain, you must carry me for ever now, unless you can restore the meat,” and try as he would the Spider could not shake him off !

So the Spider carried Little Crab to his house, and when they arrived there, he called to his wife to bring out a stick and beat Little Crab with it. But Little Crab was artful, and moved quickly from side to side to avoid the blows, which then fell heavily upon the Spider instead, and in a few minutes he fell down and died.

This frightened Mrs. Spider so terribly that she ran right away into the forest, and Little Crab was left alone. There was a pond just outside the Spider’s house, and it looked so much softer than the earth that Little Crab

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crawled and rolled down to the edge, and managed to roll right in.

You see he was really a Water-Baby, and not a proper child at all. So you must make allowances and excuses for him, for he really did not know how to walk on land. We are all rather afraid of what we don't understand, aren't we ?

He has lived happily in the water ever since, and his mother was very sensible about it. She was very very lonely at first, but as she said, she loved him so much that she could be quite content as long as she knew he was happy. And she knew very well he never could have been happy in this world, which after all is made for the ordinary people !

XII.

WHY THE HARE IS AFRAID OF THE DOG.



ANY, many years ago, long before you were born, the Dog and the Hare were great friends. I must tell you how it came about that they took a dislike to each other ; for now, you know, a Hare simply runs as fast as ever she can if she catches sight of a Dog ; while the Dog never loses an opportunity of chasing the Hare !

One day the Hare said to the Dog : “ It must be rather wretched for you all alone, out here in the fields,” for the dog had not made friends with man in those days, he was only a wild dog, something like a wolf, not a bit like the beautiful great mastiffs and others we see here at home. “ I wish you would come back to our town with me,” she continued, “ you should live in my house, it is a very nice one, and quite close to the town,” and she tossed her head with pride. “ A very nice one indeed, so cosy and comfortable. All the passages even are littered down with hay and straw, and there is a lovely mat of moss over the porch, which keeps out all the draught and cold.”

WHY THE HARE IS AFRAID OF THE DOG.

The idea rather pleased the Dog, though he was not quite sure whether it would suit him permanently, for he loved the free roving life in the fields. However, it was autumn, and the wet season would soon be coming on, so he said "That is a very kind suggestion of yours Mrs. Hare, very kind indeed, and I should much like to see your house. I should be very pleased indeed to pay you a visit."

"Hurrah!" cried the Hare, "then that is settled, I am delighted, Mr. Dog, and when can you come?"

So they talked for a little while, and the Dog said he must have a day or two to get some clothes from his tailor, "For I must be smart when I visit you, dear Mrs. Hare," he said, with a bow, "I should not like you to be ashamed of me."

"Now that is very sweet of you, Mr. Dog," said the Hare, blushing and looking very confused, as well she might, for she had something rather awkward to say to him, and she did not wish to offend him or hurt his feelings in any way, and she hesitated and felt very uncomfortable.

"Of course my love for you is very great, and I admire you very much, but you see—" and she hesitated again, wondering how she should go on—"would you mind—that is would you care to"—and she stopped.

"Well, well, madam," snapped the Dog in a moment seeing she was unable to continue, "what has upset you?"

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Either you wish me to come or you do not, which is it ? Which is it ? ” he barked.

“ Oh, dear Mr. Dog, do be patient,” cried Mrs. Hare. “ The other Hares, who have not had the honour of seeing you and knowing you as I do, would probably be frightened if we were to walk straight into the town. They can never have seen anyone so noble looking, nor so handsome. It would be such a pity, for you would not see them at their best, and I do so want you to be friends,” she continued.

“ I see,” said the Dog, “ well, what do you propose ? ”

“ I was thinking it would be so much better for us to drive there, but then my carriage is not large enough for two people, should you mind driving very slowly so that I could run alongside and shew the driver where to go ? I could not let you arrive there before me ! I must be there to welcome you,” the Hare went on. “ What do you think of that plan, Mr. Dog ? Do tell me ! ”



“ I don’t see why that plan should not act quite well ; but my poor little friend, surely you will be very tired, won’t you ? ”

“ Not at all, not at all,” cried the Hare, “ so shall we say the day after to-morrow ? Will you meet me here

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Mr. Dog ?” So it was agreed that they should meet there in the afternoon.

Now the Hare had no carriage, but she was so frightened of the Dog when he barked, even though they were friends then, that she felt she must say something to pacify him. So she was rather in a fix.

Suddenly she remembered a very large bag that had been in their family many years. She went up to the attic and got it out and examined it carefully.

“Yes, I think I can manage it,” she said to herself. “The Dog is not so very wise if it comes to that ! Well, we must see,” and she went on with her work of preparing the best bedroom for the Dog.

She put fresh straw in all the rooms and swept out the passages. You wouldn’t have known the house when she had finished, she had made it look so different.



Then she set to work to brush her own clothes and made herself look so smart. Just as she was ready to start off, she turned back to look at the house, and felt very pleased with her work. “I think next year I must have some new sun-blinds,” she mused, blinking.

Have you ever noticed what bright eyes Hares have ? Mrs. Hare was well aware of her charms and she blinked, as all Hares do, to attract attention to her pretty eyes, and

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it became such a habit, that she even did it when she was quite alone.

“I think it all looks very nice,” she said as she tucked a violet into her ruff and started off, dragging the huge bag behind her.

The Dog was nowhere to be seen, for the Hare had purposely arrived in good time, and she threw down the bag behind the hedge. Just as she came out on to the road the Dog appeared, and they waved paws to each other till they were close enough to speak.

“Good-day, Mrs. Hare,” said the Dog, and “how are you?”

“Oh, very well in health, dear Mr. Dog,” replied the Hare, “but a little worried. I daresay you’ll think me silly, but there—I will tell you all about it. Of course you know that although I have a nice house, I am not really well off, for every year my income gets less and less, and no one can be wealthy when that is the case. It is always hard to do with less.”

The Dog began to wonder what was coming next. .

“I had hoped to have had my carriage done up, but, dear friend, I find I simply cannot afford it, the house has swallowed up all my money. I have had to spend so much on the repairs which I was obliged to do,” she continued, “for ours is an old house, my family have lived

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there for ages and ages and I could not let it go to wrack and ruin."

The Dog nodded a grave assent.

"And so, I am going to ask as a great favour, that you will allow me to bandage your eyes before you enter the carriage, so that you may not notice how shabby it is," and she produced a scarf.

Now the Dog didn't much care about it, but he thought he was so strong, that he could easily overpower the Hare, and so she would surely never be silly enough to try to play him a trick.

"Of course, Mrs. Hare, as your guest, I must do as as you wish," he said in his politest manner, "though really I should never mind your carriage being shabby, and I am sorry you should have worried so much about it."

So the Hare bandaged his eyes, and got him into the bag, and he was so heavy, she had all her work cut out to half drag and half carry him. Every now and again she spoke to him, and said how sorry she was to think that he was missing all the lovely scenery they were passing.

On the way to Mrs. Hare's house, they came to the town where all the Hares lived. Mrs. Hare's house was some distance on the other side of the town. It was a large house, as Hares' houses go, and stood by itself, some long distance from the others in that neighbourhood.

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But her mother lived in the town, and she was so pleased to see her daughter again, that she determined to persuade her to remain for a day or so.

“Welcome, welcome, my dear daughter,” said the Mother-Hare, “it is good to see you again, and now you are here you must stay the night, I will not allow you to go any further to-day.”

Now the Dog was heavy, and Mrs. Hare was very glad to rest, so she readily agreed, and went upstairs and took off her things, telling the Dog that he must stay in the carriage, as there was a disturbance in the Hares’ town, and it would be wiser for him not to show himself, as at such times a stranger was apt to be suspected and treated roughly.

“I could not bear you to be subjected to any discourtesy, and so I shall bring you some supper here,” said she, pretending that the carriage had been put up in the yard. The Dog was very comfortable, it was so warm and cosy in the bag, and he felt rather tired after his rough journey, so it was an easy matter to persuade him to remain there.

Presently all the Hares crowded round Mrs. Hare. “What have you got in the bag?” they asked, which I think you’ll agree was very rude.

“Oh, that is a charm,” she replied.

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"Take it out and let us see it, we want to see it," they clamoured all at once, making a fearful din !

"If I did that, it would lose all its powers, and then we should none of us benefit," said the Hare. But they were so persistent in their enquiries, that she became alarmed, and saw that she would have to be very careful if she were to keep her secret.

When all was quiet for the night, and every Hare safely tucked up in bed, Mrs. Hare got up again and went out, and gave the Dog some food. As soon as he had eaten it, she said "Now we must resume our journey, for I am sorry to say that I find the Hares in this town so behind the times and so superstitious, that they say that all strangers must pay a tax if they sleep here the night. I am quite ashamed to tell you this," she continued "but you see we have no choice. We must escape while they are asleep, for if the tax is not paid, and you are here in the morning, it will mean punishment for us both."

"Dear, dear," said the Dog, "what benighted people to be sure. How is it you are so different, dear lady ?"

"Well, you see, I have travelled a good deal," replied Mrs. Hare, "and that makes such a difference. I should hate to be so prejudiced and narrow-minded." So she closed up the bag and off they went.

Next morning as it was getting light, they came to the Hyæna's farm, which was not very far from Mrs. Hare's

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home, and as the Hyaena was a busy person, she was up betimes and at work on her land.

The poor Hare was getting very, very tired, and as they got on to the Hyaena's land, she began to find the Dog very heavy, so she had to drag the bag behind her ; that was all very well as long as she kept to the path, but she saw a short cut which would take them home much sooner, and away she went over Mrs. Hyaena's sprouting corn, dragging the Dog wearily behind her.

Now when Mrs. Hyaena heard the noise of the bag in the corn, crushing and scrunching it, she called out " Who is that destroying my corn ? " This terrified the Hare, and she nearly fainted with fright, for she did not know what-ever to do.

Of course the Dog was dreadfully anxious too, and when he heard the Hare say, " May I present you with a piece of meat out of my bag, for luck, Mrs. Hyaena ? " he burst the bag and jumped out with a 'boo-ouup !' And the Hare ran away as quickly as she could, and hid in the grass.

" I shall go and see who it is," said Mrs. Hyaena, and when he heard that, the Dog also took to his heels and ran away as quickly as ever he could.

He ran, and ran, and ran, and soon his tongue was hanging out of his mouth and he was nearly done, when suddenly he saw the porch of Mrs. Hare's house. She had

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described it so well, that he recognised it at once, and was only too thankful to go in and rest.

Presently he took out his needle and cotton, and putting on a thimble he began to mend his clothes. He was more vain than tidy, I am afraid, and did not wish Mrs. Hare to see him with a torn coat.

The Hare meantime, waited till the Hyaena had gone, and then she came out of hiding to pick up her bag, for she did not want to lose that ! And when she reached home you can guess how much surprised she was to find the Dog sitting in the porch mending his coat.

"It is so nice and cool out here," he said, "I hope you won't mind. Of course I will go in if you do."

"Oh dear no," said Mrs. Hare, relieved to find that the Dog had apparently forgotten her treachery, "I am only so grieved to think that your coat should have been torn, I must mend it for you."

"Don't think of that, pray," returned the Dog, politely, though rather doubtful of her sincerity.

"Oh ! but I must insist upon finishing it for you while you take a rest. I am quite a good needlewoman, Mr. Dog, indeed I am," said the Hare bridleing and blushing.

So the Dog was persuaded to take a rest, and to give up his seat to the Hare, who took his coat from him, and putting on her eye-glasses, commenced to darn the tear.

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“ Lie down, dear Mr. Dog, lie down on the moss mat, you will find it very comfortable.”

“ Thank you, I will,” said he, and he stretched himself at her feet and lay there panting, as you know Dogs do.

Now the Hyaena was determined to find out who had spoiled her corn, so she sniffed about in the corn and grass till she had discovered the Hare’s foot-prints. “ Ha ! ha ! so that’s who it is,” and she threw back her head and roared with laughter. “ Oh ! you silly little thing, I’ll soon settle you ! ” she shrieked

But she first went and put all her babies to bed, thinking that they would be safer there, and this little delay gave Mrs. Hare a good start..

When she arrived at the Hare’s house, and saw the Hare and the Dog she was so surprised that she never stopped to say “ Good morning,” or “ How do you do ? ” or to make any polite remark at all, she simply shouted out, “ Which of you two was I chasing ? ”

Then the cunning Hare said, “ Well, who is panting ? For the one who is panting is surely the one who has been running last ! ”

And the Hyaena said, “ I suppose it must have been the Dog,” and she rushed at the Dog to kill him, but he was too quick for her, and jumping up, made as if he meant to seek shelter in the house. The Hyaena raced through the porch after him, and they both stuck in the door

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together. There they pushed, and bit, and scratched each other, until suddenly the Hyaena caught sight of the Hare's bag, so she pushed the Dog towards it and managed to get him in, then tying it up securely she went off home, calling back over her shoulder to the Hare "I'll come and settle up with *you* another day."

Now as you know, the Hyaena is a very powerful beast, and so she had no difficulty in getting her burden home. And when she had arrived she flung the bag down so heavily that the poor Dog lay stunned for awhile.

Presently he revived a little and happened to hear the Hyaena talking to her babies ; her last words put him in a terrible fright. "Whatever you do," said she, "don't let the Dog out while I'm away ; I shall not be very long. We shall have a splendid feast to-night." Then she went off—I don't know where, but I rather suspect it was to settle her little difference with Mrs. Hare.

No sooner had she gone than the Dog, who was shivering with fright, said very faintly "Good morning, Baby-Hyaenas, have you ever seen a Dog ? "

All the Baby-Hyaenas growled and grunted together, and I'm sure you could not have distinguished what they were saying—anyway the Dog could not, so very, very gently he said through his chattering teeth "Wouldn't you like to see my nose ? It isn't a bit like yours, you know."

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Now the Baby-Hyaenas had never seen a Dog in all their lives, though they had often heard their Mother-Hyaena talk of such animals, so they were really very curious to see him, and after a minute or two the eldest one, rubbing his own nose, said "What is it like then?"

"Oh, ever so much prettier than yours," replied the Dog, and then he added quickly, fearing they might be annoyed, "Mine has had special treatment. Perhaps if you saw it and liked it, you could copy it, for I know how clever you all are."

This pleased them immensely, and they all cried out at once, "We must wait till mother comes back and then we shall look at it."

Of course this did not suit the Dog at all—he did not want to wait, so very cautiously he said "You can see quite well if you open the bag a little."

So they were silly, as Baby-Animals often are, and opened the bag, but quickly pulled it together again and pushed him further into it.

"I never saw anything," squealed the smallest of the Babies. "I'll tell mother, I'll tell mother; I want to see, I want to see," and to pacify the tiresome little creature the others opened the bag again, for they did not want her to tell their mother. They were rather off their guard, as the Dog had been so quiet, and quick as thought he jumped

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over the pack of them and scurried off as fast as ever he could.

They were so frightened, for Mrs. Hyaena was a stern mother, that all they could do was to stand staring stupidly after the Dog, who called gaily to them "Ta-ta, Little Hyaenas, have you ever seen me run ? Ha ! ha !" And he disappeared !

Had he not escaped that day we should never have heard any more about him, and who knows, perhaps we should not have had any dogs now !



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